

**THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS OF EDUCATION
MANAGERS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR
SCHOOLS**

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation “The appointment process of education managers and its consequences for schools” represents my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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SUMMARY

The aim of the study was to investigate the appointment process of education managers and the consequences of this for schools. A literature study was conducted on these two aspects. This was followed by a survey involving 67 educators from three geographically divergent secondary schools in Kwa-Zulu Natal, namely an urban, rural and peri-urban school. The respondents' views indicate flaws in the current system related to: the minimum requirements for principalship, the shortlisting and interview processes and the role of bias in the selection of candidates. Respondents also believed that insufficient attention was paid to induction and mentorship programmes. The before mentioned impacted negatively on the school's functionality regarding quality assurance, interpersonal relations, decision-making, parental involvement and learner discipline. These relate to low educator morale. The findings of the study indicate that the current system of educator promotions needs to be revised so as to improve best practice in the profession.

KEY TERMS

Appointment process; Education managers; Recruitment; Selection; Interview Committee; Education managers' influence; Education managers' relationships

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CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The new South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996 (hereafter referred to as the Schools Act), has ushered in a two tier system for the administration and control of schools (Department of Education, 1996a: 16). These are the School Governing Bodies (SGB) and School Management Teams (SMT). The SGB comprises of representatives from the parent, educator, non-educator, and learner sectors (in the case of secondary schools). The SMT is made up of the Principal, Deputy Principal and Education Specialists. The SGB plays a key role in the appointment of the members of the SMT (Education and Labour Relations Council [ELRC], 2003:66-67). This research is a study of the process of the appointment of school managers, and the consequences it has on the role-players, the stakeholders and the school as an institution.

Prior to the Schools Act, the appointment of education managers was done by Superintendents of Education. Such appointments took into account candidate suitability based on academic assessment ratings, years of teaching experience and relevant qualifications. Appointment processes and procedures varied in the four main Departments of Education. 'Black' schools were controlled by the Department of Education and Training, 'White' schools by the House of Assembly, 'Coloured' schools by the House of Representatives and 'Indian' schools by the House of Delegates (Pather, 1995:6).

However, since 1996, the appointment procedure has been drastically revised as follows:

- the recruitment and selection of candidates for managers in schools are now the responsibility of the SGB; and
- the appointment and induction of the successful candidates is the prerogative of the Department of Education (Department of Education, 1996:33).

The educational landscape in South Africa is challenged on several fronts. Visible dichotomies exist between rural and urban schools, between township and urban schools and between former White and Non-White schools (Bush & Heystek, 2003:134-136). As a consequence of these dichotomies, differences exist in terms of the composition, outlook and aspirations of the SGBs. As regards their composition, SGBs appear to have specific political, religious, cultural and racial leanings which dictate the selection of their managers. The focus of this study is on the appointment process of education managers as carried out by the SGBs and on the consequences of such appointments on the school and stakeholder populations in general, and on educators and learners in particular.

SGBs are entrusted with challenging responsibilities. According to Thody (1994:6), school governors are "...advisors, supporters, watchdogs, moderators, facilitators, guardians, managers, directors and trustees." In essence, school governors are expected to perform an array of functions. Professional functions relating to the day to day running of the school, however, are the responsibilities of the principal, the SMT and the educators (Bush & Heystek, 2003:136).

Principals and the management staff retire on an ongoing basis, and vacancies arise perennially. It is the prerogative of the SGBs to establish interview committees to conduct recruitment and selection procedures to fill the vacant positions. The levels of competency and the aspirations of the committee members, as well as the degrees of subjectivity, have cast aspersions on the recruitment and selection processes. There exists ample room for further research on the functions and performances of interview committees. The question of accountability needs to be addressed as governor performance in South Africa is not monitored, and governors can quit at any time. In England and Wales, by way of comparison, governor performance is monitored by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) (Thody, 1994:16-18).

School governance in South Africa is based on overseas models, in particular models of the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand and Australia (Karlsson, 2002:328). In fact,

democracies throughout the world are beginning to embrace the devolution of authority, responsibility and accountability from central to school level – the so called school based management or institutional autonomy (Bush & Heystek, 2003:127-128).

Race, gender, level of education, socio-economic status, and geographical location, together with politics and religion, play significant roles in the composition of the SGBs (Karlsson, 2002:332-335). The selection of education managers invariably becomes skewed along similar lines, compelling the school to lead a predetermined course. Devolution of power then becomes abuse of power with, *inter alia*, the following consequences:

- educator-morale being lowered;
- inter-personal problems arising both among staff members, and between staff and parents; and
- mediocrity and limited commitment towards the promotion of a culture of teaching and learning (Van Wyk, 2004:52-54).

Informal interviews conducted by the researcher revealed that many educators perceive the present policy of the appointment of education managers to be inherently flawed. Research conducted on SGBs with regard to the experiences of South African educators revealed that many educators believe that the SGBs elect managers whose experience, qualifications, credibilities and histories, both in the profession and in the community, can be seriously questioned (Van Wyk, 2004:52). Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:43) maintain that in many instances the concerns of the educators are understandable, that “...few governing body members have a clear grasp of the tasks and responsibilities required at different post levels and therefore select candidates on dubious grounds.”

School principals occupy the most pivotal position in the school’s hierarchy, and as this study purports to highlight, the appointment of principals dictate several outcomes for schools. Heck (1992:21) professes that improved student achievement can be attained through strategic school organisation and strong principal leadership. This is despite environmental constraints such as the low socio-economic status of the parents, the

diverse language and cultural backgrounds of learners, and parents' limited participation in school matters.

Rowan *et al.* (in Short & Spencer, 1990:117), believe that principals are a step removed from the teaching process and can therefore not be directly held accountable for student achievement. Andrews *et al.* (in Short & Spencer, 1990:17), argue, however, that "...gains and losses in students' test performances are directly related to teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership".

The flexibility afforded by current legislation permits SGBs to appoint Post Level 1 classroom practitioners to Post Level 3 or 4 principals (ELRC, 2003:73-74). This practice is educationally unsound, as Post Level 1 educators are classroom practitioners *per se*, whose function is primarily the delivery of the school curriculum (ELRC, 2003:67). The professional management functions of the school are the prerogative of the SMT, where Post Level 1 educators are not included. Inexperienced school principals would contribute to the detriment of schools as institutions. This perception is supported by both empiricists and logical positivists who believe that "...all knowledge has to start from experience...(that) .. it is not possible to know anything other than that which comes from experience" ('Empiricism/ Logical Positivism', Encarta Encyclopaedia, 2005:1).

It is the belief of the researcher that educators, in particular long-serving and aspiring educators could become demoralised, demotivated and despondent by the processes involved in the appointment of education managers in general and school principals in particular. The negative mindsets of educators could inevitably result in a decline in educator performance and service delivery.

The situation is exacerbated further by the fact that there are no exit strategies for inexperienced and under-performing school managers. Instead it becomes the prerogative of the Department of Education to workshop and capacitate such principals (ELRC, 2003:15). This is done at great expense to the taxpayer.

The researcher has a personal involvement in this study. At the school where the researcher teaches, principals have been appointed from the ranks of Post Level 1 classroom practitioners. This happened on two consecutive occasions and resulted in a decline in educational standards, practice and performance. The newly appointed principals were inexperienced and lacked the capacity to fulfill the obligations of their demanding roles. In the one case, the principal came from another community. The choice of his candidature resulted in a split in the ranks of the SGB and led to the resignation of the SGB chairperson. There was further dissension between the principal and the SMT, the learners and a large section of the community – with near-tragic consequences. The principal was abducted, assaulted and threatened. This ordeal led to his resignation and eventual emigration. The principal's ordeal resulted in the members of staff and also the learners becoming highly traumatised and they needed to be counselled. The story made headlines in both local and provincial newspapers (Daily News, 1999:1), and East Coast Radio, the coastal radio station, held news reports in its hourly news bulletins on 17 September 1999.

The SGB, in the eyes of many (including the researcher), repeated its 'error' when it chose the principal's successor. The choice of candidate fuelled further discord, and interpersonal relations between the principal and his SMT, staff, learners, as well as a large sector of the parent community, reached an all time low. In the weeks following the appointment of the principal, there were widespread resignations in the SGB. A six month investigation, commissioned by the KwaZulu-Natal Education Department, followed. The principal has since been placed on a mentorship programme, as the Department of Education does not have an exit strategy to remove him from his position (Stanger Weekly, August 2006:1). Similar situations, it was ascertained, also prevail at other schools in KwaZulu-Natal.

The researcher believes that the entire system of recruitment, selection, appointment and induction of education managers needs to be revisited and redesigned. The present educational governance model used in South Africa would favour First World nations such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, New Zealand and

Australia, but to superimpose it in South Africa (as it is done at present), makes it highly problematic. Bush and Oduro (2006:370) add that "...it would be easy but facile to advocate improved processes based on models in developed countries. What is more likely to succeed is a set of recommendations firmly grounded in the realities of African education." Whilst the First World nations are technocratic and well-resourced, South Africa is yet an emerging and largely agrarian nation, with relatively low levels of literacy and high levels of underdevelopment (Institute for Democratic Alternative in South Africa [IDASA], 2007:1).

Principals and other education managers need to be thoroughly prepared for their roles. In the USA for example, the Aspiring Leaders Program (ALPS) and the Educator Leadership Development Academy (ELDA) are strategies intended to train and prepare principals for their leadership roles (Stein & Gewirtzman, 2003:141). In the UK programmes such as the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), the Headteacher Leadership and Management Programme (HEADLAMP) and the Leadership Programme for Serving Educators (LPSH) empower, capacitate and hence prepare principals for leadership positions (James & Vince, 2001:307).

In South Africa, as in the whole of Africa, there exists no formal requirement that expects principals and other education managers to be trained prior to being appointed into managerial positions (Bush & Oduro, 2006:364). Yet it was deemed prudent to import a system of educational governance from the developed world. The researcher is intrigued by this, and hence finds it relevant to embark on this research.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The problem that will be investigated in this study pertains to the appointment process of education managers and its consequences for schools. The focus will be on the roles played by the SGB and the Department of Education who work together in the appointment of education managers.

The study will attempt to find answers to, *inter alia*, the following questions:

- What processes are involved in the appointment of education managers at schools?
- What are educators' perceptions of the appointment of education managers at schools?
- What are educators' views on the consequences of the appointment process?

1.3 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The aims of the research are to

- undertake a study of relevant literature to determine what processes are involved in the appointment of education managers;
- conduct an investigation to determine how the appointment process is perceived by educators;
- establish how the appointment process of education managers impacts on the functioning of schools; and
- make recommendations based on the literature review and the research results on how the appointment process can be improved.

1.4 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

1.4.1 The appointment process

The Thesaurus function of Word defines 'appointment' as assign to an 'office'. Prior to an education manager taking up office, he/she has to undergo an appointment process. This is a four pronged process involving recruitment, selection, appointment and induction.

These four processes are discussed below.

Recruitment: According to Newton and Zeitoun (2003:58), ‘recruitment’ means ‘matching the individual and the organisation to form an employment relationship’. The recruitment of education managers is done by placing advertisements in education bulletins, national and provincial newspapers, and postings over the internet.

Selection: ‘Selection’ involves the process of choosing the most suitable candidate to fill a vacant position. The Interview Committee of the SGB conducts the selection process. The selection process is carried out in two stages:

Stage 1: Candidates are short-listed on the basis of their *curriculum vitae*.

Stage 2: Candidates are interviewed by the selection panel. The selection panel comprises of the chairperson and secretary of the SGB, a departmental official, and Union representatives.

Appointment: ‘Appointment’ refers to the placement of the successful candidate in an advertised position after all due processes were followed. All appointments are done by the Superintendent General of Education.

Induction: The Thesaurus function of Word defines ‘induction’ as the installment of a person into a seat. Induction is the final stage of the appointment process and is carried out by the designated officials of the Provincial Circuit Office.

1.4.2 Education managers (school-based)

Education managers are members of the SMT and include the principal, the deputy principal and education specialists. The title ‘Education Specialist’ has subsequently (with effect from July 2008) been changed to ‘Department Head’ by the Department of Education. The school principal is in charge of the SMT and is thus the most important education manager of the school.

1.4.3 Consequences

The Thesaurus function of Word defines ‘consequences’ as the ‘cost’, or the result of an action. In the context of this study, ‘consequences’ are the results of the appointment process on the school and its role-players.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN

The proposed methods of research in this study will be

- a literature study of available and relevant literature; and
- a survey.

A literature study is essential in order for the researcher to have a global yet exhaustive picture about the topic he/she intends researching. Schumacher and McMillan (1993: 112-113), maintain that a literature review adds to one’s understanding of selected problems and helps place the study in a historical and associational perspective. Literature reviews also avoid repetition and duplication of research; instead, they help identify areas for further research based on topics that have already been explored.

This literature study will incorporate both primary and secondary sources and will include books, newspapers, journals, papers delivered at educational and public gatherings, Department of Education circulars and Government publications.

In the empirical investigation, this study will follow a quantitative approach. A quantitative approach is structured in nature and the data is gathered in statistical form using questionnaires. Deductive logic is used, which means that the study progresses from a general statement to a specific conclusion (Mouton, 2006:152).

Questions will focus on the roles played by the SGB, the school principal and other managers, and on their influence on the effective functioning of the school and on

educator morale, amongst others. The questions will be arranged in logical order, in a 'closed' form, and respondents will be asked to circle their choices.

The following procedure will be employed:

Sample: Three diverse secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal will be used in this study. They are a rural school, a township (peri-urban) school and an urban school. The school principal together with his/her management team and educators will form the sample population.

Data collection: Questionnaires will be handed to the principals of the three selected schools. Respondents will be requested to complete the details on the questionnaires as honestly as possible, and their anonymity will be guaranteed.

Data processing: The data collected will be analysed using a computer software package. The findings will then be interpreted.

Details about the research design and methods appear in Chapter 4.

1.6 THE DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 contains the introduction and background to the investigation, the problem statement, aims and motivation for the research, as well as an overview of the research design and methodology.

Chapter 2 will provide a review of the literature on the recruitment, selection, appointment and induction of education managers.

Chapter 3 will provide a review of the role of education managers in schools and their influence on the effective functioning of the school and on educator morale.

Chapter 4 will explain the research design and methods used to conduct the investigation.

Chapter 5 will consist of the presentation and discussion of the research results.

Chapter 6 will provide the conclusions and recommendations. The limitations of the study will also be outlined.

1.8 SUMMARY

This chapter introduced the research topic and the methodological approaches that will be used in conducting the investigation. The purpose of the research is to investigate the process followed in appointing education managers, and to try and establish the consequences that these appointments have for schools.

If the perception that education is the cornerstone of a society's wellbeing, and teaching is the mother of all professions, rings true, then it becomes evident that education managers form the axis around which schools evolve. Of the education managers at school level, the school principal occupies the most pivotal position.

Having provided this introduction, it becomes prudent that a literature study has to be conducted to outline the appointment process and to determine its consequences for schools. In chapter 2 the focus will be on the selection process followed in appointing a school manager.

CHAPTER 2

THE PROCESS FOLLOWED IN APPOINTING EDUCATION MANAGERS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the process followed in the appointment of education managers. The roles played by both the Department of Education (DoE) and the School Governing Body (SGB) will be looked at. The Employment of Educator's Act, Act 84 of 1996, outlines four steps that need to be followed in the appointment of education managers, *viz.* recruitment, selection, appointment, and induction. However, a fifth stage, that of mentorship, which follows the appointment of a candidate, is also deemed relevant. In South Africa, however, mentorship programmes are followed only in cases of underperformance and incapacity, which means that they are the exception rather than the norm.

The essence of this research is the appointment process, and the research is confined to secondary schools only.

2.2 EDUCATION MANAGERS

2.2.1 Composition and post levels

The SMT comprises of the principal, deputy principal and education specialists, formerly known as Heads of Department. The principal occupies the pivotal position, being both the educational manager and the instructional leader (Mamabolo, 2002:78). Learner enrolments determine the status of the school. The Employment of Educators Act, Act 76 of 1998, stipulates that an institution with less than 630 learners is classified as a S3

institution, whereas an institution with more than 630 learners is classified as a S4 Institution (ELRC, 2003:74). Accordingly, a S3 school is managed by a post level 3 school principal, whilst a S4 school is managed by a post level 4 principal. However, the SMT is overall in charge of managing the day-to-day professional aspects of the school.

2.2.2 Post requirements

Feistrizer (in Spoehr, 2004:66) contends that school principals occupy an important position in society, hence the recruitment and selection of principals should not be a hurried one. The wrong choice, for the purpose of expediency in filling a post, has the propensity to lead to heartache and harm to the school and the community at large. He proposes, therefore, that the requirements for the post of principal be revised to include at least a bachelors degree and a background check, including also the passing of a test on the laws and regulations pertaining to a principal's job. Furthermore, leadership abilities, political savvy, a sense of urgency, management competence, resourcefulness, energy, and resilience and dedication, should be prerequisites. In South Africa, it is not mandatory for principals to meet all these requirements. However, the Minister of Education, Ms Naledi Pandor, a strong advocate for the licencing of educators, announced on national television that from 2011, anybody applying for the position of school principal has to be in possession of at least an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) (SABC News @ 19:00: 25 July 2007). In the United States of America it is mandatory for principals to be licenced, with a Masters Degree being the minimum requirement for an administrative position (Milstein & Associates, 1993:149). In addition, for a senior position such as of a principal, an average of 20 years teaching experience was the benchmark. This, however, does not preclude educators with less years' teaching experience from applying for the position, but such cases constitute the minority (Whitaker & Vogel, 2006:10).

According to the National College for School Leadership in the United Kingdom, (NCSL, 2006:1) appointments to the headship (principalship) are made once candidates

have completed 20 years of service, of which 15 years ought to have been spent in the classroom, and the remaining five years as a deputy principal.

2.2.3 Level-hopping

In the context of this study, 'level hopping' refers to the fast-tracking of promotions by a process of skipping levels on the promotions continuum. At school level, and in accordance with the Educators Employment Act, Act 76 of 1998, personnel are deployed in terms of levels ranging from post level 1 to post level 4. As mentioned previously (*cf.* 2.2.1), the most important criterion that determines educator appointment at a school is the learner enrolment. The new Schools Act permits practically any educator to apply for promotion to a post level of his or her choice, provided that the individual has the minimum qualifications (M+3 or REQV 13) and the required minimum years of experience (ELRC, 2003:73-74). This situation, in the opinion of this researcher, is a fundamental contributor to the myriad of challenges that schools are faced with today, as many an ill-prepared and ill-equipped individual has been selected as principal of a school, much to the school's detriment. This constitutes an unacceptable and untenable situation which needs thorough investigation.

Research conducted by McPherson (1999:63-65) revealed that principals, by virtue of their status and positions in society, ought to have higher academic qualifications and more experience than perhaps is the case in South African schools at present. Level-hopping, according to McPherson, ought to be discouraged and replaced by a systematic progression of candidates to the principalship. However, the view also exists that this step-by-step progression up the promotions ladder tantamounts to ring fencing or selection from a 'closed shop'. On the issue of raising the minimum qualification levels, McPherson (1999:64) mentions that some sections of the teaching fraternity were disadvantaged in the past and had limited opportunities to upgrade their qualifications.

He adds, however, that even though this is true, it cannot forever be used as a justification for low academic qualifications and inadequate preparation for the position of principal. The National Education Department has, as from 2007, instituted the Advanced

Certificate in Education (ACE) qualification for principals, in collaboration with selected universities in South Africa, and is currently conducting pilot studies with under-qualified school principals to test its efficacy.

Winter, Partenheimer and Petrosko (2005:300) claim that the position of deputy principal ought to be one of principal-in-waiting, as the traditional stepping stone to the position of principal ought to be through deputy principalship. Evidence shows that in affluent areas in particular, due consideration is given to levels of seniority and school principals are selected from the ranks of deputy principals. However, in other areas, including some of those that this researcher knows of, level hopping has become the norm rather than the exception.

2.2.4 Pre-service training for principals versus learning on the job

Individuals aspire to become school principals for different reasons, some of which, according to Villani (2006:9), are to

- make a difference to current circumstances;
- impact on a large number of people;
- establish a safe environment;
- support educators;
- ensure that all learners learn and achieve;
- build or strengthen a professional learning community;
- work with many constituencies towards a common goal;
- make decisions rather than to be told; and
- find a better way to function.

Perceptions of the appointment of principals differ in the different countries, and so do the aspirations and attitudes of educators towards the post of principal. In the USA and the UK, superintendents select principals from aspirant principal pools, which are dwindling, according to research findings (Winter *et al.*, 2005:299). In South Africa the situation at present, made possible by legislation (*e.g.* the South African Schools Act,

Act 84 of 1996; the Employment of Educators Act, Act 76 of 1998; the Labour Relations Act of 1995), is that post level 1 educators are applying successfully for posts of school principals, without ‘the tools for the trade’ and learning on the job, through arranged mentorship programmes. In the USA, according to Chauncey (2005:126), principals have to undergo coursework in certification programmes to prepare them for the work of principal. However, many principals complain that their traditional university classroom training is too generic and theoretical, and not focused enough for the practical realities demanded by the position of principal. The Centre on Reinventing Public Education [CRPE] (2008:1) in Washington cites principals as stating that the skills development during pre-service training was inappropriate and inadequate. Instead, principals maintain that greater emphasis ought to be placed on curriculum and instruction, and the supervision of educators in professional development.

Milstein and Associates (1993:230) maintain that school-university partnerships must reconceptualise leadership and professional development, as they noted that professional development has been too narrowly defined. They further contend that the pre-service preparation of educators and the pre-service training of principals are unrelated, both conceptually and programmatically and, in addition, pre-service and in-service education are similarly compartmentalised. All four these aspects need to be seen as components of a continuum of professional development. Leadership development has to be integrated at all levels if effective management with empowered, professional staff is to be maintained.

2.2.5 Gender imbalances

Winter, *et al.* (2005:302) maintain that women are disadvantaged in the process of administrator appointment due to gender bias. They quote the researchers Pounder and Merrill (2001) (in Winter, *et al.* 2005:302) who maintain that women are attracted to administrator positions to the same degree as men, but are systematically ignored in the process by search committees and district personnel departments traditionally controlled

by men. They conclude that by so doing, women may be a largely untapped resource for filling administrator vacancies.

In South African schools women constitute the minority in management positions, even though they outnumber males outside the ranks of SMTs (Morrell, 1998:220). This viewpoint is endorsed by Mathipa and Tsoka (2001:329-330), who state that discrimination is a severe barrier to women's advancement to positions of leadership in the education profession. They believe that discrimination against women based on untested grounds and perceptions constitute unfairness. Thakathi and Lemmer (2002:193) confirm that male dominance in education management is a worldwide phenomenon. They profess that in South Africa management has traditionally been male-dominated in the senior levels of decision-making since 1994 and that women largely occupy positions in middle-management. They are of the opinion that gender bias is the unseen barrier to women's career mobility into higher levels of school management (the so-called 'glass ceiling' scenario).

The above-mentioned discrimination against females exists despite the fact that legislation such as the Employment of Educators Act, Act 76 of 1998, and the Labour Relations Act, Act 76 of 1998, forbids discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion and political association (KZN Department of Education [DoE], 1997:4). According to Blackmore, Thompson and Barty (2006:311), liberal feminists have argued that gender equity policies exist on paper only. They advocate that women with the same skills, attributes and capabilities as men should be appointed in positions, irrespective of their gender. This would constitute procedural justice, as merit and equity are not gender specific.

Some countries like Australia and New Zealand display patterns of gender balances as a compromise measure: if the principal is a male, then his deputy would be a female, and *vice versa*. Gender interplays with locality also, meaning that the belief that female applicants from outside communities would not add value to managerial roles in view of

family commitments, would preclude them from being selected to managerial positions (Blackmore, et al., 2006:312).

2.3 THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY (SGB)

2.3.1 The role of the SGB in the appointment process

The Employment of Educators Act, Act 76 of 1998, stipulates that the appointment, promotion or transfer of educators may only be made on the recommendation of the Governing Body of the public school. The Head of Department may only decline the recommendation of the Governing Body of the public school on the following grounds (ELCR, 2003:5), namely if

- (i) any procedure collectively agreed upon or determined by the Minister for the appointment, promotion or transfer has not been followed;
- (ii) the candidate does not comply with any requirement collectively agreed upon or determined by the Minister for appointment, promotion or transfer;
- (iii) the candidate is not registered, or does not qualify for registration, as an educator with the South African Council of Educators;
- (iv) sufficient proof exists that the recommendation of the said Governing Body was based on undue influence; or
- (v) the recommendation of the said Governing Body did not give regard to the democratic values and principles referred to in respect of the appointments and filling of posts.

SGBs are often dominated by their chairperson, and parent and learner representatives are not always afforded the opportunity to participate freely and by means of reasoned deliberation (Adams & Waghid, 2005:31). According to Adams and Waghid, the chance exists for those with power and authority in the SGB to dominate the proceedings and thereby ensuring the acceptance of a dominant view. The authors further contend that the powerful members' interaction with school governors suggests that most

appointments are finalised by vote, meaning majority rule. However, they mention that majority rule may not necessarily lead to the desired outcome if the voting process is not preceded by reasoned discussion and debate, thus upholding the principle of rationality which is a constitutive principle of democracy. This leads to the conclusion that majority decision is valid, but room should exist to challenge such a decision. The majority decision remains valid only until it can be challenged by good reasons and rational debate. When majority decision is applied in educational appointments it could encourage candidate preference and abuse if selections are done by consensus without deliberation on the suitability of a candidate. The reasons behind choosing a particular candidate must be legitimate and educationally sound, regardless of the established belief that legitimacy resides in numbers. Education White Paper 2 states that "...governance policy for public schools is based on the core values of democracy". The core values are identified by Karlsson (2002:329) as follows:

- Representation – of all stakeholder groups.
- Participation – in active and responsible roles.
- Tolerance.
- Rational discussion.
- Collective decision-making.

However, the composition of SGBs is widely believed to be done along religious or sectarian and, in some instances, racial lines. The selection and/or appointment of education managers is influenced accordingly. Majority rule thus becomes less democratic, with 'the winner takes all' scenario being enforced in a school (Adams & Waghid, 2005:32).

Through their choice of members to serve on the SGB, parents are, in terms of sections 20(4) and (5) of SASA, Act 84 of 1996, ultimately accountable for the choice of school managers (Maile, 2002:330). Emanating from this statement is the expectation of the existence of contractual accountability between the State and the SGBs as employers, and education managers as their appointees. Research conducted by Adams and Waghid (2005:31) highlights the SGB's tendencies to prefer 'in house' candidates to 'outside

candidates', with the former referring to candidates from within the school establishment and the latter to candidates from elsewhere. This would create the impression that educators serving on the school's staff would be considered above anyone else. This is in direct contravention of the non-discriminatory provisions in the Act. SGBs that indulge in such practices undermine and invalidate the appointment process, as applicants are not given equal treatment. The exposure of such malpractices often results in grievances being lodged, as well as in unnecessary lawsuits against the SGBs (Adams & Waghid, 2005:31).

2.3.2 Capacity building for SGBs

According to Carolle (2005:486-490), school governors have a statutory duty to appoint and appraise education managers. School governors are instruments of government policy, therefore governments are held responsible for the governors' actions. Governor training must be a sustained priority of governments. The competence of members of the SGB in fulfilling their respective roles is dependent on the training that they receive. Training in the form of workshops needs to be intensified, with regular follow-ups. The training and capacity building of interview committees, educators believe, ought to be accompanied by some sort of certification proving competence. Many educators are of the opinion that the training of SGB members ought to be conducted in the language spoken and understood by SGB members, and not in the language of the service providers. Capacity building for the task of selecting SMT members should entail skills development. Accordingly, SGBs with semi-literate or illiterate persons serving on interview panels may prejudice deserving candidates (Van Wyk 2004:53-54). Karlsson (2002:332) points out that incapacity on the part of parents to perform school governance duties could be attributed to poverty, underdevelopment and discrimination emanating from the apartheid era. She contends further that the South African Schools Act commits education departments to provide capacity building for the development of SGB members in order to perform their functions effectively. McPherson (1999:89) maintains that training for the selection of SMT personnel ought to be done on an ongoing basis, and not only when vacancies exist.

2.3.3 The interview committee

A School Governing Body, constituted in terms of the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996, has to establish an interview committee. Additional members may be co-opted by the SGB when their expertise is needed at particular interviews. The interview committee is responsible for short-listing the applications to obtain a manageable number, and thereafter, for interviewing and assessing them for the purpose of making recommendations. The interview committee is comprised of the following (ELRC, 2003: 77) persons:

- one departmental representative (who may be the school principal), as an observer and resource person;
- the principal of the school (if s/he is not the department's representative), except in the case where s/he is the applicant;
- members of the School Governing Body, excluding educator members who are applicants for the advertised post/s; and
- one Union representative per Union that is a party to the provincial chamber of the ELRC. The Union representatives serve as observers to the process of short-listing, interviewing and the drawing-up of preference lists.

Each interview committee appoints amongst its members a chairperson and a secretary, whose responsibility is the maintenance of accurate records and the minutes of all meetings. Records have to indicate the date, the names of all attendees and the constituencies they represent, as well as proof of invitation and transmission of information regarding appointments to Unions. It is imperative that every effort be made to document relevant details in respect of the various selection processes, such as short-listing, interview decisions and motivations relating to the preference lists submitted. Finally, it is the responsibility of the Principal/Rector/Superintendent of Education (Management) to ensure the safekeeping of all documents for at least two school calendar years (Department of Education, 2007:6).

2.4 THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS

2.4.2 The identification of a vacant post

Posts become vacant *inter alia* through attrition or discharge of educators or when there is an increase in learner enrolment. Each of these will now be discussed.

2.4.1.1 Attrition

‘Attrition’ is a collective term that embraces resignation, retirement, death, transfer, secondment or the promotion of serving educators, that results in a vacant position being created. Resignations are generally a matter of choice. An educator may resign by giving 90 days notice in writing, or such shorter notice as the employer may approve of at the request of the educator (ELRC, 2003:5-6).

2.4.1.2 Discharge of educators

The Superintendent General may, having due regard for the applicable provisions of the Labour Relations Act, discharge an educator from service on the following grounds (ELRC, 2003:8):

- continuous ill-health;
- the abolition of the educator’s post or any reduction in, or reorganisation or re-adjustment of the post establishments of the department, school, institution, office or centre;
- if, for reasons other than the educator’s own unfitness or incapacity, the educator’s discharge will promote efficiency or economy in the department, school or institution in which the educator is employed, or will otherwise be in the interest of the State;
- unfitness for the duties attached to the educator’s post or incapacity to carry out those duties efficiently;
- misconduct;

- if the educator was appointed in the post in question on the grounds of a misrepresentation made by the educator relating to any condition of appointment; and
- if, in the case of an educator appointed on probation, the educator's appointment is not confirmed.

2.4.1.3 Increase in learner enrolment

The post provisioning norms (PPN) of a school is determined by the learner enrolment of a school. The higher the learner enrolment, the more educators are required, and vacancies are created. The converse also holds true, *i.e.*, if there is a decrease in learner enrolment, educators would be in surplus and would have to take up posts elsewhere (ELRC, 2003:8).

2.4.2 Stages in the appointment process

2.4.2.1 Recruitment

Resolution 5 of 1998 (ELRC, 2003:76) outlines the procedures to be followed in the advertising and filling of educator posts, including those of principals. Advertisements for vacant posts are self-explanatory and have to include the minimum requirements, procedures to be followed to apply, names and telephone numbers of contact persons, the preferred date of appointment and the closing dates for the receipt of applications. Advertisements are to be accessible to all who may be interested in applying, non-discriminatory and in keeping with the provisions of the Constitution of South Africa. An added requirement is that advertisements must clearly state that the State is an equal opportunity affirmative action employer. All vacancies in public schools are to be advertised in a gazette, bulletin or circular, the existence of which is made public by means of an advertisement in the public media, both provincially and nationally. The gazette, bulletin or circular is to be circulated to all educational institutions in the province.

2.4.2.2 Selection

Pre-interview processes

The pre-interview processes include sifting and short-listing, and inviting all candidates who have been short-listed.

Each of these concepts will be explained briefly.

- *Sifting*: The sifting of applications is done at the Circuit Offices. The Circuit Offices acknowledge receipt of all applications by informing all applicants of their receipt, clearly indicating if the application has been rejected, and whether the applicant meets the minimum requirements. Successful applications are referred to the institutions concerned. The Circuit Office handles the initial sifting process to eliminate applications of those candidates who do not comply with the requirements for the post(s) as stated in the advertisement. Trade Union parties to Council are given a schedule containing the names of educators who have met the minimum requirements for the post(s) and the names of the educators who have not (ELRC, 2003:76).
- *Short-listing*: The short-listing of candidates is done by the Interview Committee. The criteria used for short-listing is expected to be fair, non-discriminatory and in keeping with the Constitution of the country. The curricular needs of the school must be taken into account when short-listing. In addition, the obligations of the employer towards serving educators generally receives preference. The recommended number of candidates to be short-listed for each promotion post should not exceed five (Department of Education, 2007:10).

Blackmore, *et al.* (2006:302), believe that the short-listing process as such has inherent flaws which compromise the opportunities of certain candidates. They highlight four areas of inconsistency: experience and potential, preferred applicants, panel competency, and inconsistency of decision.

Each of these challenges will be discussed briefly.

Regarding experience and potential, the said authors maintain that a dichotomy prevails between experience and potential. Whilst experience can be verified by referees, potential is a relative concept which cannot be measured. Experience itself is a privilege to candidates who have had the opportunity to act in certain positions; not all applicants may have had such opportunities. Experienced candidates, with accompanying skills and knowledge, are often rated above others, who get sidelined through no fault of their own.

With regard to preferred applicants, there is a tendency by SGBs to favour candidates from their own schools to candidates from elsewhere. This procedure stems from the belief that 'inside' candidates have already served the community and school and enjoy visible status, as compared to 'outside' candidates. Blackmore *et al.* (2006:305), maintain that this practice could imply automatic succession to a promotion post and could exclude other applicants, even those with superior qualifications and expertise, from having a reasonable opportunity.

Panel competency plays a role. Despite the training of selection panels on aspects such as merit and equity, prejudice and bias among panel members persist (Blackmore *et al.*, 2006:306). Studies in Victoria and South Australia show that during interviews panelists preferred candidates whose answers to questions were within their own cognitive level of understanding, and penalised candidates who produced academically sound responses which they, for example, acquired as a result of their post-graduate studies. In other instances, panelists indicated a preference for candidates with a humble disposition ('calm presence', 'gentle loving qualities' and 'loving, soothing style') rather than for candidates with formal and matter-of-fact dispositions. Parallel studies in the United States on panel competency and its implication for school leadership revealed that candidates with the most experience and with a demonstrated performance in community management and educational leadership, were chosen above others.

Regarding inconsistency of decision, the fact is that scoring applicants during interviews is a subjective exercise. According to McPherson (1999:24), selection interviews do not always give a good indication of a candidate's potential. Often interviewers have preconceived ideas about the kind of candidate they are looking for. Based on the work of O'Neill *et al.*, (in McPherson, 1999) McPherson highlights the following traditional practises that can distort the selection process:

- i) basing judgments on intuition rather than on facts;
- ii) making 'snap' judgments;
- iii) insisting on a stereotype of what a 'good' candidate is;
- iv) comparing a prospective principal with a previous post-holder or with other candidates rather than on grounds of the agreed criteria; and
- v) preferring a candidate to one's own image.

Regardless of work-shopping the processes and procedures to SGBs by officials from the Department of Education, panelists ultimately select candidates by virtue of their own configurations (McPherson, 1999:28).

- *Invitations:* Applicants short-listed by the interview committee are given five (5) working days notice to attend the interviews. This period is reduced if all parties are available at shorter notice. Notification by telephone is usually confirmed in writing.
- *The interview process:* Interviews are generally conducted in quiet congenial milieus that are conducive to the selection process (Pather, 1995:16). Usually the school library or another appropriate venue is chosen.
- *Questioning:* The chairperson of the interview committee reads the questions for the interviewees to respond to. Well-structured questions are prepared in advance, and are orientated around issues pertaining to the vacant position. According to Martin (1993:81), effective questions can only be formulated once the specific objectives of the interview are established. She maintains that the language used during the interview should be appropriate to the profession, but not so 'erudite' as to confuse the interviewee. In addition, she posits that the

- ‘funnel’ approach should be used to structure the interview. This approach involves progressing through the interview from general topics and closed questions (‘yes-no or fact responses’) to more specific topics and ‘open’ questions, namely questions designed to elicit more in-depth and revealing responses. In addition, she maintains that in order to maintain consistency in evaluating candidates, the interviewer should essentially ask each candidate the same questions. This has evidently become the practice in KwaZulu-Natal.
- *Listening*: In order to assess and evaluate a candidate, and to accord a score to his/her responses, the scorers at the interview need to be attentive and vigilant. They need to concentrate and focus well. Martin (1993:79) defines ‘listening’ as follows, “Hearing the sound stimuli from another person; identifying the sound stimuli as symbols; assigning importance to the symbols; relating the symbols to past experiences and evaluating the symbols.”

Listening, according to Martin (1993: 80-82), is a complex process involving not only hearing, but “...understanding, judging, storing and responding appropriately”. She further adds that listening also entails looking for visual clues which may become apparent from facial expressions, bodily postures and other mannerisms. These help to understand and interpret responses better. Gestures and tone of voice also allow the interviewer to detect more information than is conveyed through the spoken word.

Though widely an accepted and preferred method used in the selection and appointment of staff, the interview process also has serious disadvantages. It favours those who are eloquent as opposed to those who are not. Blackmore *et al.*, (2006:303) confirm that “those who can spin a good line” are more likely to be appointed. An additional problem is that of understanding the information in the applicants’ *curriculum vitae*. Members serving on selection panels need to be able to interpret the contents of the CVs. Blackmore *et al.*, (2006:302) maintain that some applicants are privileged by virtue of their skill in writing, and others have their CVs drawn up by professional associations and

leadership centres which could consequently advantage them when compared to other, possibly better candidates.

- *Recording:* According to Donaghy (1984:190), the purpose of recording the interview is to produce accurate, relevant, objective and complete details of the interview content. Though rather dated, Donaghy's contributions to interview recording are still relevant today, and are believed to be widely used by practitioners and interview panels. Because more than one candidate is interviewed for a position, recording the details of the interview could later serve as an important mechanism when comparative evaluations are made.

Donaghy (1984: 191-192) highlights the three main recording techniques as being memorising, note-taking and electronic recording. Of the three, he maintains that memorisation is probably the least used technique because one needs a highly developed memory to be able to record all the information during the selection interview. Note-taking is perhaps the most popular method of recording. Electronic recordings can be done by either audio or video tape, which Donaghy maintains comes closest to providing accurate evidence of what took place in each interview. He argues that the tape recorder or video tape provides a much more accurate analysis of the interview situation. The advantage of the audio tape over the video recording to Donaghy (1984: 191), is that the audio tape does not intrude on the interview and may well be forgotten by both parties involved in the interview process.

Note-taking is the method most widely used during interviews for education managers (Donaghy, 1984:191). It is the duty of the secretary of the interview committee to maintain accurate records and minutes of all meetings. Records must indicate the date, the names of all present and the constituencies that they represent, proof of invitation and transmission of information about appointments to the Unions. Every effort must be made to document relevant details in respect of the various selection processes, such as short-listing, interview decisions and

motivations relating to the lists of preference submitted (Department of Education, 2007:8).

- *Confidentiality:* All members of the interview committee and the SGB are required to sign a declaration of confidentiality which then prevents them from discussing any personal information either with the candidate or about the candidate. Disputes and delays in filling the vacant positions result when committee members breach the confidentiality clause (Department of Education, 2006:5).
- *Recusal:* Members of the interview committee or the SGB must recuse themselves on any issue in which they have a personal interest (Department of Education, 2006 : 5).
- *The role of observers:* Each of the officially recognised Teacher Organisations party to the ELRC has the right to appoint one representative as an observer to the processes of short-listing, interviewing and drawing up of a preference list. It is incumbent on the chairperson of the interview committee to give at least five working days written notice to each of the teacher organisations to be present at the various levels of the interview process already mentioned. However, the non-attendance of observers would not prohibit the selection process from proceeding as long as the chairpersons have informed the teacher organisations of scheduled meetings.

The secretary of the interview committee needs to keep record of such invitations and transmissions to the Unions (Department of Education, 2007:8-9).

Post-interview processes

- *Nomination:* At the conclusion of the interviews, the interview committee ranks the candidates in order of preference and submits the list of preference to the SGB. This list is then ratified at a full sitting of the SGB, which has to take into account the provisions of the Employment Equity Act, Act 55 of 1998, as well as the provisions of the Employment of Educators Act, Act 76 of 1998. The

successful candidate (*i.e.* the person who tops the preference list) is notified in writing of his/her nomination and has seven (7) days either to accept or reject the nomination. If s/he accepts the nomination, then the SGB forwards her/his name to the Human Resource Directorate. Should the candidate decide not to accept the nomination, the offer is then made to the candidate whose name is second on the preference list. The recommendations of the SGB are thereafter submitted to the Circuit, the Ward and the Human Resource Support Service Centre, together with the following documentation (Department of Education, 2007:11):

- An EC5 form of the recommended candidates;
- a schedule of short-listed applicants, (on a form called EC3);
- an interview assessment of the recommended candidates, EC4
- igned copies of the minutes of the interview committee and of the ratification by an SGB meeting;
- the motivation for the rank-order of the recommended candidates, only where candidates with lower scores are preferred to candidates with higher scores;
- the application forms of all the recommended candidates;
- proof of invitations to the relevant Unions; and
- a workforce profile (EC 8).

2.4.2.3 *Appointment*

The final decision in the appointment process is made by the Directorate Human Resource Services, and the placement of candidates is carried out in terms of the Employment Equity Act and in compliance with the Employment of Educators Act of 1998, the South African Schools Act of 1996 and the Labour Relations Act of 1995, and based on the recommendations of the SGB (ELRC, 2003:77).

2.4.2.4 *Grievances*

An aggrieved applicant may lodge a complaint with the Employee Relations component at the Human Resource Support Service Centre. A grievance complaint should be lodged within seven days from the date of the interview and this complaint has to be heard within 30 days of receipt of such grievance. Union observers may also lodge complaints on behalf of their members. Should any matter not be resolved to the satisfaction of the aggrieved party, a formal dispute may be lodged with the Education Employee Relations Council within 30 days of receipt of such grievance. Until the disputes have been resolved, the Department of Education is not permitted to make any appointment in the post in dispute.

The following are some of the areas that can lead to grievances being lodged (ELRC, 2003:77) :

- failure to notify/invite the recognised trade Unions;
- late notification by the SGB to the recognised trade Unions;
- late notification/ invitation by the SGB to the applicant;
- the interview committee not being a quorum;
- the exclusion of an educator member of the SGB who is not an applicant for a promotion post;
- a non-South African citizen short-listed and interviewed;
- a applicant short-listed who does not meet the minimum requirements;
- members of the interview committee having a vested interest but refusing to recuse themselves;
- discriminatory/ prejudicial criteria used to shortlist/ interview the candidate; and
- breaching of the code of confidentiality.

2.4.2.5 *Withdrawal of promotion*

The Employment of Educators Act stipulates that should it be found that a promotion was effected on incorrect information, such a promotion would be withdrawn.

2.4.2.6 *Induction*

Successful recruitment does not end with the appointment decision. Instead, school governors have a responsibility to induct the newly appointed school principal, and this has to be done as soon as the appointment has been agreed on and no grievance was lodged. Inductions need to be planned in advance so as to introduce and welcome the new principal or other education managers to their new positions.

According to the Hay Group's 6th step, the following questions are pertinent when it comes to induction (NCSL, 2006:28):

- How do we move from appointment to successful performance in the job?
- What are the needs of principals in their first few months in the position?
- How can we use the data obtained during the recruitment to aid the principals' development?
- How do the attitudes and activities of the SGB affect the position of the principals, for example, with regard to performance management and professional development?
- What strategies for induction should the SGB consider and incorporate into information about the school to make posts more attractive?

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (NCSL, 2006:28) outlines that when properly planned, induction enables new employees to quickly become fully operational. It further points out that if new principals are recruited with retention (withholding of promotion) in mind, it is integral to the selection process to offer him/her reassurance as to the conditions of work and support that can be expected. It is an accepted fact that key positions of leadership are lonely positions and the first few months may be particularly challenging for new heads: he or she may have to work with unsuccessful candidates and, in some cases, have to deal with subversion or outright opposition from staff members.

According to Gronn (1999:16) insight into the stages of leadership is useful in considering both the appointment and the induction of principals. The leadership stages are usually characterised in terms of the following:

- entry, encounter, shock, sorting things out;
- initiation, idealism, uncertainty;
- adjustment, survival, taking hold;
- development, consolidation, integration;
- reshaping, refinement, educational leadership;
- plateau;
- letting go, divestiture, disenchantment; and
- time for a change.

Principals often experience a culture shock when they have to adjust to the exigent realities of their new roles (McBeath, Oduro, Jacka & Hobby, 2006:131). They often feel that they are not well equipped to deal with issues that confront them in respect of school leadership and management. A possible solution to this would be the position of acting principal as this would mean a form of induction that provides first-hand experience. However, research conducted by Draper and McMichael (2003: 66-81) indicates that those persons in acting positions are often deterred from the position of principal once they discover the demands that go with it. They cite external support as critical to induction and retention. Mentoring, coaching and critical friendship are three forms of support to help principals to adjust, manage and grow in the job.

The induction of new principals in KwaZulu-Natal is generally conducted by the SGB Chairperson and Superintendent of Education Management (SEM) from the local Circuit office. If the candidate is an incumbent from the same school, the induction is more of a formality than an event. If the candidate is from 'outside', the induction process is more pronounced and includes a tour of the campus and its facilities, meeting the staff members and familiarising him/herself with the vision and mission and the ethos of the school.

2.5 MENTORSHIP

Mentorship refers to the help and guidance provided by experienced, more knowledgeable and generally older persons to the less experienced and usually, but not necessarily, younger individuals. In educational administration inexperienced and newly appointed school principals are usually placed under the mentorship of the more senior and experienced principals (Villani, 2006:19). According to Muze, Thomas and Wasden (1992:310), if the mentoring relationship between the inexperienced administrator and the experienced principal is to be positive and beneficial, it has to be long-term. In addition, the mentor principal must be recognized as an effective school leader and the mentored principal has to be enthusiastic and has to establish a close working relationship with the mentor principal. Kitavi and Van Der Westhuizen (1997:261) indicate that mentoring has come to be recognized as the panacea for many problems facing new principals, and it is a cost-effective induction strategy. They recommend that a veteran principal should be chosen as mentor as such an individual could provide advice on various rules, procedures and community expectations as well as on issues at zone or department level.

Mentorship has become an important area of focus in the new education dispensation in South Africa. Possibly the most significant reason is the fact that key positions in the school's administration is accessible to any educator with an M+3 qualification and who has the required minimum years' teaching experience. In many cases the inexperienced SGB selection committees add to the dilemma by sometimes recommending unsuitable candidates for key management positions. It then becomes the prerogative of the Department of Education to capacitate and empower such candidates through mentorship programmes which often do not work. Evidence, supported by informal discussions with individuals who are involved in mentorship and other capacity building programmes, indicates that these programmes are not always beneficial to many of the participants.

Muze *et al.*, (1992:315-319) maintain that mentorship programmes are most effective when aspiring administrators are tutored prior to their being appointed to any post. They

indicate that a meaningful mentoring relationship relies on the careful selection, training and evaluation of mentor principals, as well as the careful selection of interns, so that the best instructional leaders are involved in the training of future leaders. Kirkpatrick (2000:43) is of the opinion that mentors themselves need to be trained; training ought to be standards based, sequential and flexible. Some of the reasons underpinning mentor training are that good principals may not be good mentors, mentors may be too protective and controlling, they may have personal agendas, they may not acknowledge an intern's limitations, and also the fact that mentors permit interns to become too dependent on them.

According to Villani (2006:13), in the USA certification is a pre-requisite for mentorship. Crow, Mecklowitz and Weeks (1992:194) agree that mentoring has become a major component in recent reform strategies. They mention, however, that the advantage of a mentor depends on a variety of factors which include availability, openness to alternative ways of doing things and commitment to the principles of continuous learning.

Kitavi and Van der Westhuizen (1997:253) distinguish between induction and mentorship strategies in developed and developing countries. They maintain that the challenges facing Third World countries like South Africa, are very different from those facing First World nations like Canada, and it would be presumptuous to prescribe identical training programmes, including induction strategies, for the beginner principals.

2.6 EVALUATION

The interview process could determine whether a successful appointment is made or whether it is necessary to re-advertise the post. A successful appointment could serve as a benchmark for future recruitment ventures. If a successful appointment could not be made, it becomes necessary to re-advertise the post. The previous process needs to be re-evaluated. It may be necessary to seek objective external advice, consulting with credible candidates who could have but did not apply, and with others who dropped out during the process (NCSL, 2006:29).

The two key questions in evaluating the approach to selection and appointment are :

- Is it working? and
- How can it be improved?

Recruitment is seen to be working if the results in the selection of the best available candidate meet with the school's expectations in terms of the candidate's performance. This, however, may take some time, even years, to be seen. As far as the second question is concerned, there has to be visible evidence of improved performance in areas such as the general outlook of the school, staff morale, management reports, inspection reports and school evaluation. Recruitment and selection would be successfully accomplished if the appointed candidate is seen to be 'walking the talk', *i.e.* translating the rhetoric at the time of selection and appointment into day-to-day action (NCSL, 2006:30).

2.7 SUMMARY

Chapter 2 provided an overview of the appointment process of education managers. The process in the appointment of a school principal as the head of the institution featured more prominently in the discussion, as the principal is considered to be the leader of all the leaders on the school campus. Other members of the SMT provide more of a supportive role. The appointment of the deputy principal/s and education specialist/s is in some way or another influenced by the school principal. The appointment process of education managers has been devolved from the Department of Education (the state) to the SGB (the community). The SGBs recruit, interview, select and recommend candidates for promotion.

The appointment of education managers is often marred by impropriety by certain SGB members who recommend unsuitable candidates, *i.e.* candidates whose expertise, experience and credibilities are often in question. This is to the detriment of the school.

The role of the education managers in the schools and their influence on the effective functioning of the school and on educator morale, will be the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION MANAGERS IN SCHOOLS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF THE SCHOOL AND ON TEACHER MORALE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focussed on the process of appointing education managers. The roles played by the SGB and the Department of Education in the appointment process were highlighted. Chapter three provides a critical analysis of the roles education managers play in schools. By virtue of their respective positions in the education hierarchy, education managers are in the forefront of the delivery of quality teaching and learning in schools. The relationships that education managers have with the various role-players in education eventually determine the success or failure of the schools as institutions. Finally, the impact that education managers have on educators' morale, motivation and job satisfaction will be discussed.

3.2 THE ROLE OF EDUCATION MANAGERS IN SCHOOLS

3.2.1 Duties and responsibilities of education managers

The duties and responsibilities of education managers vary in accordance with the agreed workloads per SMT member as stipulated in the Educators Employment Act, Act 76 of 1998 (Department of Education, 1998:24). An overview of the duties and responsibilities of education managers reveals that education managers are responsible for the execution of the following tasks: administration, personnel management, classroom teaching, the

management of extra- and co-curricular activities, and interaction and communication with the school's various stakeholders.

(i) The principal

The role of principal includes, but is not restricted to the following: professional duties, duties as an *ex officio* member of the SGB, and duties as a liaison officer between the school and the Department of Education.

Each of these functions will now be discussed.

Professional duties:

The principal is responsible for

- the implementation of all educational programmes and curriculum activities;
- the management of all educators and support staff;
- the management and use of learning support material and other equipment;
- the safekeeping of all school records; and
- the implementation of policy and legislation.

As an *ex officio member of the SGB*, the principal needs to

- attend and participate in all meetings of the SGB;
- provide the SGB with a report about the professional management of the school;
- assist the SGB in handling disciplinary matters pertaining to learners.

As a *liaison officer between the school and the Department of Education*, the principal needs to

- assist the Head of Department (*i.e.* the Superintendent General) in handling disciplinary matters pertaining to educators and support staff employed by the Department of Education;
- provide accurate data to the Head of Department when requested to do so;

- perform all functions delegated to him/her by the Head of Department in terms of the Employment of Educators Act, Act 76 of 1998, and the Education Laws Amendment Act, Act 31 of 2007 (Department of Education, 2007:12).

(ii) The deputy principal

The core duties and responsibilities of the deputy principal are primarily to assist the principal in the running of the school and to deputise for the principal during his/her absence from school (Department of Education, 1998:65). The Principal delegates administrative duties to the deputy principal as circumstances in the school dictate, based on the principles of consultation, equity and reasonableness.

(iii) Education specialists

The Employment of Educators Act, Act 76 of 1998, stipulates the core duties and responsibilities of the education specialists (school-based), namely to

- engage in classroom teaching as per workload;
- provide and co-ordinate guidance, and appraise staff members on aspects pertaining to all aspects of curriculum delivery;
- supervise and control the work of learners;
- manage and control administrative tasks as per learning area or learning field; and
- assist the principal in administrative and/or other tasks as requested by the principal.

In view of the pivotal position the principal occupies in the education continuum, in the school hierarchy and in the community in general, the emphasis of this dissertation is on the interactive and supervisory role that the principal, in particular, plays in the delivery of education. The roles played by the other education managers, though not less important, are in effect supportive.

3.2.2 Main management tasks

The principal is regarded as both an educational manager and an instructional leader. Whitaker (1998:23) points out that even though ‘management’ and ‘leadership’ are often used interchangeably, both are important tasks for the principal to perform, and the one is not more important than the other. He further points out that, for purposes of clarity, ‘management’ is concerned with keeping the organisation running, with maintaining day to day functions, ensuring that the work gets done, monitoring outcomes and results, and organising efficiency. ‘Leadership’, on the other hand, is more specifically concerned with personal and interpersonal behaviour, focuses on the future, on visions and purposes, change and development, quality of outcome, achievement and success, and personal effectiveness. Van der Westhuizen (1991:135-140) declares that in the main, the four management tasks obligatory to the principal are planning, organising, leading and controlling. These four management tasks invariably lead to others like decision-making, delegating, motivating and coordinating. The core areas of management include managing staff, managing parents, and managing pupils and finances (Mamabolo, 2002:82).

The four main management tasks will now be discussed in more detail.

3.2.2.1 Planning

Planning primarily evolves around decision-making, problem-solving and time allocation. Marx (in Van der Westhuizen, 1991:137), regards planning as a management task which is concerned with deliberately reflecting on the objectives of the organisation, on the resources, as well as on the activities involved, and drawing up a suitable plan for effectively achieving these objectives. Through careful planning the set of objectives are realised. Planning is an integrated management task and the various tasks in education have a planning element. According to Theron and Bothma (1990:181), planning refers to a theoretical reflection on policy, rules, procedures, strategies, methods, skills and competencies which are undertaken by the principal with a view of realising goals and

objectives by means of people. Planning also ensures better cooperation, saves time and unnecessary effort, and makes better supervision and control possible.

3.2.2.2 *Organising*

In the school, 'organising' refers to the arranging, grouping and allocation of activities to the various members of staff or subject departments. Organising, as part of allocation, entails the delegation and assigning of duties, and the coordination of efforts among all teachers and learners, to ensure maximum efficiency in the attainment of predetermined objectives and goals directed by the policy of the school. Organisation therefore concerns people and the means by which tasks are accomplished by people (Theron & Bothma, 1990:185). The organising process involves delegation and coordination. Delegation refers to the division of labour, and implies that a person is given the right to take decisions at a lower management level, is allowed the freedom to act in a way that he/she deems fit to attain the goal, and has to provide accountability to the higher authority for the implementation of the task (Mamabolo, 2002:98). 'Co-ordination' is the process of assimilating the delegated tasks according to their value. The need to coordinate is particularly evident at school where the school's tasks have been divided into constituent components which are assigned to the teachers (Gordon, Stockard & Williford, 1992:30).

3.2.2.3 *Leading*

As an instructional leader, the principal is ultimately responsible for guiding the development and implementation of a set of clear instructional goals for the school. Portin (2004:15-17) and Gordon *et al.*, (1992:30) indicate that there are seven common functions of principal leadership in all kinds of schools. These are: instructional, cultural, and managerial leadership, human resources leadership, and strategic, external development and micro physical or political leadership.

These will now be discussed.

- *Instructional leadership*: As the instructional leader, the principal is accountable for the quality of instruction, for modelling teaching practices, supervising the curriculum and for ensuring the quality of teaching resources.
- *Cultural leadership*: The principal is responsible for tending to the symbolic resources of the school which include its traditions, climate and history.
- *Managerial leadership*: The principal has to oversee the operations of the school. These include its budget, schedule, facilities, safety and security, and transport.
- *Human resources leadership*: It is the principal's responsibility to develop the leadership capacity and professional opportunities at the school. Human resources leadership includes the recruiting, hiring, firing, inducting and mentoring of teachers and administrators.
- *Strategic leadership*: The principal is responsible for spearheading the promotion of the school's vision, mission and goals, and developing the means to reach them.
- *External development leadership*: This involves the principal representing the school in the community, developing capital, tending to public relations, recruiting students, buffering and mediating external interests, and advocating the school's interests.
- *Micro-political leadership*: This relates to the principal's buffering and mediating internal interests while maximising financial and human resources.

3.2.2.4 *Controlling*

Allen (in Van der Westhuizen, 1991:216), describes 'control' as the work a manager does to assess and regulate work in progress and work completed. Control in a school is the principal's means of checking whether the work is done. The principal controls the educators' work, as well as the academic, co-curricular and extra-curricular assignments of learners. Because the principal cannot work alone, the deputy principal and education specialists have to share the responsibility of controlling the work of the learners and the educators. Assessment of learners' work ought to be done regularly (Dlamini, 1995:50).

- *Staff management:* As the head of the institution, the core function of the principal is the management of personnel (Gordon *et al.*, 1992:29). They state that the development of teachers and the upgrading of the quality of teaching and learning is of primary importance in achieving the ultimate goals of the school.
- *Learner management:* The learners are the reason for the existence of the school (Protheroe, 2006:48). The ultimate aims of education is for the holistic development of the child towards his/her becoming a worthy citizen, as enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa. During school hours the sole responsibility of the learners' wellbeing is placed in the hands of the principal and staff who act *in loco parentis*.
- *Financial management:* The South African Schools' Act delegates the financial responsibility of the Department of Education to the SGBs, of which the principal is a member (Bolton, 2000:7-8). The principal and SGB are expected to draw up a budget for the utilization of school fees in accordance with the needs of the school. It is of primary importance for the principal to be financially aware and competent, so as to make the best use of the available funds. If necessary, the principal has to undergo specialist training in financial management, and be *au fait* with educational legislation, governing the control of school funds.

It is obvious that the school principal is entrusted with a myriad of responsibilities on a daily basis. The manner in which he/she goes about handling the various issues that confront him/her will determine the effectiveness and efficiency with which the school functions. Principals, together with the other SMT members, determine the school's culture. They determine the difference between the school being overburdened and powerless, or valued and respected (Protheroe, 2006:47). Davis and Wilson (2000:349) mention that education managers who operate in an even-handed and non-controlling manner generally elicit the strongest educator commitment, and motivated educators inspire learners to work better and achieve more.

According to Mamabolo (2002:2), the principal has the task of leading the school and ensuring that the beliefs, goals and expectations of society at large, as well as the desires

and needs of the different children are met. However, research confirms that most principals receive little or no training in the organisation and administration of the running of a school and are therefore often not qualified to lead instruction effectively in their schools. Van der Westhuizen and Legotlo (1996:69) indicate that school principals in South Africa have to face the realities of transforming schools and implementing new legislation with few or no specific guidelines for managing transformation.

Recent trends towards the decentralisation of decision-making for schools, combined with the move towards school-based management, place a even greater responsibility on the principal (Ubben & Hughes, 1992 : xiii). These authors also maintain that one of the major tasks of the principal is to create a positive organisational climate and culture. If a strong culture exists within the school, the instructional leadership efforts of the school principal will bring about improvement in teaching and learning. The converse would also hold true, that if the culture of a school is not functional or is weak, new ideas concerning improvement with regard to teaching and learning would soon wither (Ubben & Hughes, 1992:27).

An education manager has to exercise close supervision over all aspects of a subordinate's work in order to ensure that each assignment is completed satisfactorily. In many cases human beings tend to follow the path of least resistance which, in the school situation, would translate into the so-called *laissez fair* manner of task performance. This conviction is well illustrated in the scientific management theory, which sees human beings as essentially lazy, and interested in obtaining the maximum reward in return for the minimum effort (Beck & Murphy, 1993:16). According to the scientific management theory, schools should have objectives to achieve, and school principals should ensure that educators are duty conscious and result-orientated. This theory advocates that awards and benefits be based on merit, and stresses the need to keep on working until the goal is achieved. Beck and Murphy (1993:16) further point out that the scientific management theory is fused with the theory of social evolution which holds the view that people can control and improve their world by conscious means, notably through education.

In addition to time devoted to managing micro-and macro-political situations, principals are also responsible for overseeing budgets, recruiting and hiring staff, maintaining facilities, evaluating educators, disciplining learners and working with parents and the community. At high school level particularly, the attendance at and supervision of students' extra-curricular activities take up many hours (Whitaker & Vogel, 2006:6).

3.2.3 Leadership styles of education managers

Hayward (2008:12) is of the opinion that school leadership in the 21st century no longer resides solely with the school principal. He points out that the SMT, educators, learners, administration staff, as well as members of the SGB, all lead in different ways. He identified six types of leadership styles that he believes underpin quality in leadership at schools. These six leadership styles are the following:

- *Assertive leadership*: This type of leadership is driven by a strong work ethic where educators teach well and learners learn diligently. Educational leaders get educators and learners to focus on the task at hand and guide their teams assertively, but not aggressively.
- *Breakthrough or Maverick leadership*: This type of leadership challenges complacency and encourages subordinates to move out of their comfort zones to break new ground, re-invent themselves and re-discover ways to improve performance in service delivery. This type of leadership is in keeping with Education Minister, Naledi Pandor's vision of "...affirming excellence and challenging mediocrity" (Pretorius, 2007:3).
- *Emotionally intelligent leadership*: This type of leadership involves the display of qualities such as compassion, empathy, intuition, kindness, perseverance and tact by leaders in dealing with often volatile situations at school.
- *Ethical leadership*: This type of leadership embraces qualities such as fairness, honesty, openness and respect. Decisions taken by leaders need to be guided by an ethical code and driven by the golden rule of treating others as they themselves would like to be treated.

- *Invitational leadership*: An invitational leader accepts that the school is part of the wider community and invites the community to, for example, utilize the school's facilities. Furthermore, an invitational leader welcomes ideas, expertise, viewpoints and suggestions from the community, with the view to arriving at solutions through consensus and inclusivity.
- *Servant leadership*: This type of leadership embraces the notion that every leader is a servant to his/her people. Servant leadership is about selfless service, with care and compassion, and without perks or privileges.

3.3 THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EDUCATION MANAGERS AND THE VARIOUS ROLE-PLAYERS AT SCHOOL

3.3.1 The relationship between education managers and educators

Evans (2001:303) maintains that educational managers as leaders have as much responsibility towards the staff they lead and manage, as they do towards the learners in the institution. Teacher-centred leadership focuses on the individuals who make up the staff, rather than on the staff as a collective, and aims at developing a professional work ethic based on tolerance, co-operation, compromise and consideration for others. Authoritarian leadership, by way of comparison, reflects the leaders' own stance – their own ideologies, expectations and aspirations which they enforce upon their staff members through policy and decision-making. Education managers influence the quality of teaching, the teaching-learning environment, and the lesson planning of the educators.

3.3.1.1 Quality assurance and the educator

Educators are considered to be the end users of education policy (Kallaway, 2007:30). They form the most important interface with learners on the relationship continuum of the education hierarchy. The primary role of education managers is to effectively manage educators so that learners may derive the maximum benefit in the teaching-learning situation. An essential component of the function of education managers is to ensure

quality assurance at school level. According to Eade (2004:1-7), the principal's behaviour as a manager has a direct impact on staff performance, productivity, satisfaction and turnover. Together with the principal, education managers form a key link between the evaluation process and the development process. The SMT is perceived by the educators to be a 'mechanism of coercive accountability' as they have centralised control within the schools (Wright, 2003:1).

The key functions of the SMT in respect of quality assurance are (Department of Education 2005:5):

- to inform educators of in-service training and other programmes, and to ensure that educators attend;
- to shape the school's self-evaluation, ensuring that it is done in terms of the whole school evaluation policy and in collaboration with the staff development team; and
- to realign the entire quality assurance process to the mission and vision of the school and the Department of Education.

Eade (2004:1) maintains that educators view the SMT with a certain degree of non-collegiality as there is a perception that they tell educators what to do and expect them to comply. These sentiments are shared by Wright (2003:1) and Smout (2002:42-44) who maintain that educators perceive the SMT to serve the function of enhancing quality of education through coercive managerialism, as well as disguising the quality assurance process as that of organisational democracy.

Several researchers, *inter alia* Frasier (1997), Daugherty (1996), and Steyn (2001) (in: Soman 2006: 21-22), believe that the Department of Education's quality assurance programme is not well received by educators, for the following reasons:

- educators have a negative perception of the quality assurance process;
- educators failed to take ownership of the final document as everyone did not participate in the development exercise;

- educators are not directed towards a shared vision, goal or objective, which should have been done by the principal through both short-term and long-term strategic planning;
- educators lack ownership of the quality assurance process and thus the exercise is meaningless to them; and
- changes have been demanded by the principal and the Department of Education. Educators did not really buy into this. Thus, the lack of ownership has led educators to sabotage the process.

3.3.1.2 The teaching-learning environment

In the majority of public schools educators cannot create a suitable environment for teaching and learning. Several reasons have been proposed for this situation. Some of these, according to Hay and Herselman (2002:239); Bolowana (2005:6); Guttman (2007:14-15); Davids and Makwabe (2007:1) and Karp (2007:5), are:

- the lack of physical resources such as clean water, proper sanitation and basic infrastructure;
- learners' ill-discipline and unwillingness to accept instructions and to abide by the school's Code of Conduct;
- the apparent lack of parental control and supervision of learners' work at home;
- violence, threats of intimidation and heinous assaults on educators who are perceived to be exerting 'undue pressures' on learners by demanding that work be done;
- overcrowding in classrooms and the lack of educator support, personnel and materials; and
- inequalities that exist between affluent and poorly resourced schools, and the continuous comparisons of learner results between both these types of schools.

3.3.1.3 *Lesson planning, presentation and learner assessment*

Since 2005 the Department of Education has introduced Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS) as its assessment and monitoring tool of quality assurance in schools. This instrument is aimed at ensuring that the educator (Department of Education, 2005:15)

- has an excellent grasp of the learning area;
- is highly skilled in ways to fulfill the needs and expectations of learners;
- uses the assessment of learners creatively; and
- sets high standards consistent with the levels and abilities of learners.

Education managers are expected to provide supervisory and support services, guidance, motivation, encouragement and pastoral care to both learners and educators to assist in their growth and development in the respective learning areas and fields. They are also expected to see to it that educators engage learners creatively in order that the expected learning outcomes are achieved by learners, and to see to it that educators provide learners with constructive feedback on grounds of continuous assessment, and to keep complete and comprehensive records of the learners' progress (Department of Education, 2005:15). However, realities 'on the ground' (as opposed to those in documents) present a different picture. Educators have to face challenges which impact on their abilities to deliver quality lessons. These challenges are, amongst others (Ferguson & Roux, 2003:274 ; Roper, 2007:10-11; Makwabe, 2007:4; and Kallaway, 2007:30):

- a critical shortage of textbooks and instructional aids such as chalkboards and exercise books;
- overcrowding in some classes;
- not having sufficient time to complete the entire syllabus;
- educators who are poorly/ inadequately trained or under-qualified; and
- a high rate of absenteeism and truancy among educators, largely due to low levels of job satisfaction, no motivation or a low morale.

3.3.2 The relationship between education managers and learners

As has been mentioned before, learners are the reason for the existence of schools, and evidence of learner progress brings personal satisfaction to educators (Protheroe, 2006:48). According to Protheroe (2006:48), educators experience intrinsic satisfaction “in watching light bulbs go on in students’ eyes” and believes that this plays a major role in keeping educators motivated. In addition, she mentions that high levels of student learning and achievement can be equated to high staff morale, which is made possible by the principal and education managers when they

- demonstrate to the educators that the SMT ‘works for them’ and not *vice versa*;
- keep ‘stressors’ such as extra duties and paperwork to a minimum;
- support educators and recognise them for a “job well done”;
- provide educators with professional development opportunities, both in-house and off-campus;
- create opportunities for educators to work collaboratively with their colleagues to develop leadership qualities; and
- actively involve educators in meaningful decision-making.

As custodians of the future, learners deserve the attention of all the relevant role-players on all issues that affect their learning. Kelehear (2004:32) maintains that students become victims when leaders who are under stress create a culture that is under stress as well. The entire school then becomes ‘tired’, being filled with ‘frustrated’ and ‘angry’ teachers. According to Kelehear (2004:31), leadership “...absolutely affects a school’s sense of well-being and efficacy”. He notes that when tensions are high and emotional support is low, teacher morale, learner performance and the entire school culture suffer. The opposite is also true: when teachers are given significant responsibilities for the running of the school, and receive care and support, they perform better and feel more positive towards learners and their needs.

Bolton (2000:11-12) maintains that increased learner achievement ultimately depends on changing classroom practices with a view to improving instruction. Educators remain

central to improving instruction, and education managers have to devise strategies for professional development. At present the educational climate is characterised by unruly learner behaviour that impacts negatively on the culture of learning and teaching in the schools (Samuel, 2007:5; Karp, 2007:5). This presents the SMT and the educators, who often argue that they are not equipped to handle learner violence in fear of becoming victims themselves, with daunting challenges. An alarming feature of learner violence is that girls, more than boys, are progressively engaging in physical acts of violence (Naidoo 2008).

3.3.3 The relationship between education managers and non-educators at school

The non-educator staff at schools generally includes the administrative staff, teacher assistants, school care-takers and cleaners, the security personnel and the buildings, grounds and gardens maintenance staff. Not all schools appoint all of the above personnel, with affluent schools employing more of them than historically disadvantaged and small schools. The South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996 (Department of Education, 1996a:9), stipulates that norms need to be established to regulate the allocation of school-based non-teaching personnel on an equitable basis. The SASA further stipulates that the responsibility for determining norms for the provision of non-educator personnel, including non-teaching personnel, lies with the Provincial Governments. Provincial Governments have conferred the responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the performance of non-educators on the principal, who submits reports on administrative clerks, teacher assistants, *etc.* to the Directorate: Performance Management (KZN Department of Education, 2007:10).

The school's administrative staff is responsible for the efficient day-to-day running of the school. According to the KZN Department of Education (2007:40-46), the non-educator staff, in their interaction with the SMT and the professional (teaching) staff, needs to

- possess good knowledge of their jobs, and skills;
- be competent, flexible, and responsible, and take the initiative in dealing with daily tasks;

- be able to plan, organise and lead;
- manage both financial and human resources; and
- work as a team.

By virtue of his/her office, the school principal is responsible for ensuring that the educators and the non-educator personnel work in harmony for the smooth functioning of the school. As an *ex officio* member on the SGB, the principal is responsible for ensuring that the security and maintenance personnel render satisfactory services to the school, in accordance with their contractual obligations.

3.3.4 The relationship between education managers and the School Governing Body

The relationship between the SMT and the SGB is envisioned in Education White Paper 2 which states that “...governance policy for public schools is based on the core values of democracy” (Department of Education, 1996b:12). The South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996, stipulates that parents constitute the majority in the SGB (*i.e.*, 51%). The rationale for this power balance is that the parents of the enrolled learners have the greatest stake in the school’s development and quality of teaching and learning in the school (Karlsson, 2002:330). It is the responsibility of the parents to promote the best interests of the school to ensure its development by means of the provision of quality education for all learners at the school (Department of Education, 1996b:9).

Section 20 of the SASA (Department of Education, 1996a:12) requires the SGB to

- adopt a constitution;
- develop a mission statement and a Code of Conduct for learners and support staff in the performance of their professional functions;
- determine the times of the schoolday;
- administer and control school property;
- encourage volunteers to serve at the school;
- make recommendations for staff appointments; and

- allow the reasonable use of the school facilities for other educational programmes.

Sections 15 and 16(1) of the SASA (Department of Education, 1996a:10) state that every public school is a 'juristic person', meaning that it is a legal entity to be governed by its governing body. The SGB thus has legal capacity as regards its functions and responsibilities. However, in relation to the school (*i.e.*, internal relations with the SMT and staff), section 16(2) states that the SGB 'stands in a position of trust' (Department of Education, 1996a:12). This internal relation of trust lays the foundation for the balance of power between the SGB and SMT, which is responsible for the day-to-day running and professional management of the school. The principal who serves on the SGB as an *ex officio* member is, according to section 19(2), expected to 'render all necessary assistance' to enable the SGB to perform its functions (Department of Education, 1996a:12; Bush & Heystek, 2003:136).

According to Robinson and Ward (2005:183), an amicable relationship is a prerequisite for both the SGB and the SMT to propel the school forward. The interaction between members of the SMT and the SGB lasts for only as long as the SGB members have children in the school; hence SMTs have to work with different sets of parents on an ongoing basis. Robinson and Ward (*ibid*) maintain that good governance has to do with the quality of relationships and communication, where a high premium is placed on appreciating staff, avoiding conflict and unpleasant surprises, maintaining cordial relations with everybody, encouraging mutual accountability, and building capacity.

As statutory bodies, SGBs have legal access to Education Department officials at all levels and at all times. Hayward (2003:9) believes that schools should encourage SGBs to campaign and lobby for the improvement of conditions of service of educators. Since the Department of Education is unable to provide all the necessary resources to all schools, SGBs have to motivate their communities to help to provide resources in order that the buildings, gardens and grounds are well maintained. Sufficient educational resources should also be available to ensure effective teaching and learning. The SGBs must be

sensitive to educators' administrative, teaching and extra-curricular workloads and should restrict their meetings and weekend activities (Hayward, 2003:10).

Earley (2000:199) maintains that an important role of the SGB is to monitor the work of the school. 'Monitoring' is broadly defined as 'the act of checking progress to ensure plans and intentions are under way'. Monitoring is an ongoing process, as compared to evaluation, which normally occurs at the end of a project or plan. Evaluation involves a process of data collection and analysis to form judgments about the value or worth of an activity. Monitoring and evaluating are often considered together as part of a decision-making process or of the school's quality assurance mechanism.

The SGB's involvement in the curriculum and its delivery (which forms the school's core business) and monitoring, is seen by the SGB as predominantly a matter for the SMT and the Department of Education and not for the SGB. However, the monitoring of the school development plan (SDP) and action plans, financial performance, policy implementation and the standards of achievement of learners, fall within the responsibilities of the SGB.

3.3.5 The relationship between the education managers and the parents, the community and other role-players

There is an African saying that says that it takes an entire village to raise a child. Schools are community structures where teachers and parents are expected to work together towards the total development of the child. Hayward (2003:9) points out that the parents' attitudes towards teachers and the profession are often reflected by their children's behaviour. When parents show the necessary respect, their children reflect it in the interaction with teachers. The converse also holds true: parents' negative attitudes towards educators and the school manifest in negative learner behaviour.

The committed involvement of parents, however, leads to positive school and family partnerships. Through their legislated powers, parents serving on the SGBs are

empowered to make valuable contributions to their children's education. Empowerment, according to Goldring and Hausman (1997:25), can be viewed from two perspectives, namely relational and motivational. The relational perspective portrays parent-empowerment as a process of sharing power. Power-sharing implies the joint involvement of parents and educators in the execution of school-related tasks, where parents are delegated certain powers by school authorities. According to the motivational perspective, power is based internally in each person, and empowerment emerges from parents' motivation to effect changes and to develop meaningful partnerships for the improvement of the school. Principals and SMTs view motivated parents as assets, meaning that the more parents are involved, the more energy is available for school improvement initiatives.

Lewis (2000:419-420) adds that education is inexorably linked to a host of institutions involved in educating the learner, and that the process is very complex. She indicates that public institutions such as libraries, museums, the media, businesses and social services, help educate children, and schools need to build bridges with these institutions towards the total and meaningful development of the child.

Sammons and his co-researchers (in Hofman, Hofman & Guldemond, 2002:252) maintain that community participation is a highly relevant factor in respect of school culture. The local community, particularly parents who are involved in school activities, develops a sense of efficacy that communicates itself to the children and this leads to positive academic results. This view is shared by Clark and Dorris (2006:22), who point out that research confirms that parents have a profound influence on their children's academic success, especially in the secondary grades. School managers who involve parents in the planning of their children's education understand that involvement must extend beyond merely showing up at school functions or volunteering to help with school-sponsored activities.

Clark and Dorris (2006) state that for the partnership between the school and the community to be meaningful and effective, educators and managers need to

- take time to understand the community well;
- find people to serve as cultural and linguistic ‘bridges’;
- help parents to build their advocacy skills; and
- give parents opportunities to use their skills.

Each of the above will be discussed below.

3.3.5.1 Understanding the community

Hayward (2003:10) declares that the school is a microcosm of the real world and the breeding ground for society’s human capital. Schools cannot operate in a vacuum. Relationships have to be forged between the school and the community. The school management needs to identify business institutions and agencies, religious and other leaders to assist in the running of the school, as the entire community has a vested interest in the academic achievement of its children.

3.3.5.2 Bridging the cultural divides

Language and culture are important considerations, especially if schools serve multilingual communities. Clark and Dorris (2006:24) state that as schools tap into community resources, the school management needs to identify individuals who are bilingual and well acquainted with the local education system, who can function in a bridging role to facilitate the development of trusting relationships between parents and the school personnel. This applies to many South African communities where English or Afrikaans are the languages of instruction at school while learners speak indigenous African languages outside the school (Teyise, 2008:8).

3.3.5.3 Developing advocacy skills

Clark and Dorris (2006:24) maintain that parents should be afforded the opportunities to skill themselves and schools as community institutions should be able to provide parents

with advocacy opportunities. Educational managers need to explore ways in which advocacy classes could be conducted, for example by including parents in computer classes and literacy/numeracy classes. Such opportunities would empower parents to play greater roles at school.

3.3.5.4 Providing opportunities

Clark and Dorris (2006:24) believe that to truly involve parents and community members, school management should ensure that schools open their doors. Schools should make everybody feel welcome, exuding the belief that parents and educators share a complementary responsibility concerning the academic development of the child.

According to Goldring and Hausman (1997:29), education managers, in particular the principal, need to be mindful of the following leadership styles when dealing with parents, namely facilitative leadership, human resource leadership and instructional leadership. Facilitative leadership requires that the principal should possess highly developed inter-personal skills. S/he must refrain from using formal authority to make unilateral decisions. Instead, the involvement of parents in group-decisions would engender increased ownership and add value to the educator–parent relationship.

Human resource leadership involves the roles of mediator and motivator. As tension and conflict are inevitable in decision-making processes, the principal needs to mediate, motivate and encourage parents. As an instructional leader, the principal needs to lead by example, taking into consideration the fact that in the community itself there are persons who serve in other leadership capacities, also in their respective job situations.

3.4 EDUCATION MANAGERS AND EDUCATOR MORALE

‘Educator morale’ is often used synonymously and interchangeably with ‘educator motivation’ and ‘job satisfaction’. However, these concepts differ in meaning. ‘Motivation’, according to Reeve *et al.*, (Steyn 2002:85), refers to an individual’s state of

mind and includes energising, directing, maintaining and supporting human behaviour to carry out a particular action. Job satisfaction, according to Steyn and Van Wyk (1999: 37), refers to "...the feelings of pleasure resulting from a person's perceptions of his or her work". Evans (2001:291-293) states that a significant influence on motivation, job satisfaction and teacher morale is the school's leadership and management. She also points out that other determinants of job satisfaction include the educators' needs or values fulfillment. According to Evans (*ibid*), educators' morale, job satisfaction and motivation are less likely to be influenced by externally initiated factors (such as salary, education policy, and reforms and conditions of service) than by factors emanating from the more immediate context within which educators work (*i.e.* school-specific or job-specific factors). This is in keeping with Herzberg's two-factor theory on motivation (Steyn, 2002:91-92), which indicates that individuals are not as motivated by extrinsic factors (such as salary, working conditions and job security) as by intrinsic factors (such as achievement recognition and responsibility).

According to Campbell (1999:24-29), Atkinson (2000:45-46), and Evans (1998:26-30) intrinsic factors that determine educator morale include, *inter alia*

- Interaction with learners: Most educators derive satisfaction and motivation from their daily interaction with learners.
- Accomplishment: Educators experience great satisfaction when they are able to help learners to achieve positive results.
- Recognition and praise: Educators long for recognition and praise for their achievements which serve as a positive reinforcement for effectiveness.
- Task significance: Educators experience satisfaction when they have a positive effect on the work and lives of others.
- Autonomy: Educators want the freedom to develop their own strategies and methods without fearing school authorities.

Macmillan (in Black 2001:41), declares that principals spearhead their school's climate and culture. Principals who effectively define their school's mission, who manage the school's instructional programme well, who promote a positive climate for student

learning and invite teachers to collaborate on important decisions, boost educator morale and motivation. Black (2001:41-42), as well as Davis and Wilson (2000:349-350), maintain that educators view the following as real rewards or positive reinforcers, namely self-respect, responsibility and a sense of accomplishment. Teachers measure the level of their job satisfaction by factors such as participating in decision-making, using their skills in ways that are valued, having freedom and independence, being challenged, expressing their creativity and having opportunities to learn. These are factors that management has power over.

As far as extrinsic motivation (as a factor contributing to educator morale) is concerned, the inter-relationships that educators form with the SMT and the Department of Education, the SGB, parents and community members are of great importance (Black, 2001:40-43; Hayward, 2003:9-10; Steyn, 2002:88).

3.5 SUMMARY

The educator is the implementer of education policy. The learner is the recipient of curricular instruction and needs to acquire the desired knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that are proposed in the South African Constitution. Education managers occupy an intermediate position, with the learner at the one end of the continuum and the other role-players at the other end. The influence that the education managers exert on the role-players, and *vice versa*, determines the consequences and results that manifest themselves in the learners' progress at school.

The next chapter will deal with the research design and with the methods that were used to gather information from educators. The focus was on the process followed in the appointment of managers, and on its consequences for the smooth running of the schools.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter two the process of appointing education managers at school level was indicated by means of a literature study. Chapter three outlined the role education managers play in schools and their influence on the functioning of schools and on teachers' morale. The problem investigated in this study pertains to the process followed in appointing education managers in promotion posts and its consequences for schools. The study attempts to give an indication of the following:

- the processes involved in the appointment of education managers;
- educators' perceptions of the processes followed in appointing education managers; and
- educators' views on the consequences of the appointment process.

The purpose of this chapter is to explain and justify the research approach, research design and data collection methods that were used to conduct the research to answer the main research questions as stated above.

4.2 THE SPECIFIC RESEARCH PROBLEM

The specific research problem questioned what educators' views are of the manner in which the appointment of education managers was conducted to fill vacant positions in schools, and the consequences of these appointments on all the role-players in the school. A critical look was taken at the procedures followed by the SGB whose legislated function is to recruit, select and recommend candidates to fill vacant positions at the school. Educators' views on the efficacy, ability, capacity and acumen of the interview panels to fulfill this function were determined. The South African educational landscape is littered with problems, which are adequately encapsulated in the country's electronic

and print media. Education managers are the implementers of education policy and the question that begs an answer is: Is the system of appointing candidates in the vacant positions efficient ? Are the challenges that are currently being experienced in schools influenced by the appointment process?

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study made use of a quantitative research design. The research design used in this study is a non-experimental design that ‘...describes something that has occurred’ or examines ‘...relationships between things’ (Schumacher & McMillan, 1993:34). The design used also indicated *possible* cause and effect relationships seeing that it tried to establish the views of educators regarding the impact of the appointment process on the functioning of schools and on educator morale.

The specific type of research design used in this study is a survey. In survey research, according to Schumacher and McMillan (*op. cit.*) and Weisberg, Krosnick and Bowen (1996:32-33), the researcher selects a sample of subjects and administers a questionnaire to collect data. Surveys are used to describe attitudes, beliefs, and opinions, and are designed so that information about a large number of people (population) can be inferred from the responses obtained from a smaller group of subjects (sample).

4.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

4.4.1 Population, sampling and method (questionnaire)

(i) Population

According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:159), one of the first steps in designing quantitative research is to choose the subjects/respondents. The respondents are the individuals who participated in the study and from whom data were collected. As a group, subjects are usually referred to as the ‘sample’. The sample consists of individuals

who are selected from a larger group of persons, called the 'population'. Educators working in secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal form the population of the study.

(ii) Sample

The sample used in this study was not a probability sample and results cannot simply be generalised to the whole population. The study used 67 male and female educators from a wide variety of age groups and experience, as indicated in the next chapter.

The sample used in this study was also from three diverse secondary schools. These schools were purposefully selected as follows: one school from an urban area, one from a rural area and the third from a township or sub-urban area. The reason why three diverse school areas were chosen was because circumstances in such diverse locations may be a variable that influences educators' views of the appointment process and the effect of management style. The sample was also a 'convenience' sample, meaning that the schools were accessible and within easy reach. Primary schools, combined or comprehensive schools and private/independent schools were not included in the study as this would extend the parameters of the study to an unmanageable sample population. However, the appointment process could apply to similar types of public schools, irrespective of location.

The relevance of the researcher's choice of secondary schools from the diverse geographical locations is in keeping with the established belief (as obtained from the literature reviews in chapters two and three) that the SGBs operate differently in each of the three locations and their respective roles in the appointment process is not consistent.

(iii) Method

The questionnaire as a research instrument

A questionnaire was chosen as a means of gathering data because, in the absence of direct communication, the questionnaire imposes a personal response on the respondents (see

Appendix A). According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:254), the questionnaire is the most widely used technique for obtaining information because it is economical, contains standardized questions, assures anonymity and can be written for specific purposes.

Construction of the questionnaire

According to Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:198), when a researcher designs a questionnaire, he/she should involve others as well. In the construction of the questionnaire for this study, the researcher consulted literature and obtained advice from specialists and colleagues in the field of the study.

The questionnaire consists of 84 questions, divided into three sections as follows:

- Section A consists of 10 questions in respect of the personal particulars of respondents. Respondents were given the assurance that these personal details would be kept confidential.
- Section B consists of 30 questions. These questions were derived from the information described in Chapter two of this study and deals with the appointment process.
- Section C comprises of 44 questions, which deal with the consequences that the appointment process have on the functioning of the school. These questions were derived from the literature described in Chapter three of this study.

A three-point Likert scale was used. Respondents were requested to circle the number indicating whether they disagreed, agreed or were uncertain about their choice of response to each of the statements given. Weisberg *et al.*(1996:89), indicate that the 'uncertain' option is important as it prevents people from giving meaningless answers, *i.e.* respondents may feel pressurised to answer the questions even if they are not familiar with the issues, simply to avoid seeming foolish. The quoted authors note, however, that 'no-opinion' options also have a downside, namely that they sometimes discourage respondents from reporting meaningful opinions that they do have, for example, in instances when they were tired, lacked interest or motivation, or were simply

disinterested in the topic. In these cases, respondents may simply choose the ‘uncertain’ option.

In designing the questionnaire the researcher was guided by several considerations, which formed the content of the subject matter of sections B and C.

Section B

All the statements in this section were derived from Chapter two of this study, and focused on the following:

- Minimum requirements (statements 12, 13, 14 and 24).
- Short-listing of candidates (statements 26, 34 and 37 and 17).
- The interview process (statements 11, 16, 32, 35, 36 and 39).
- Selection and recommendation and the role of bias (statements 25 to 31; 33, 38 and 40).
- The appointment process (statements 15, 18 and 19).
- The post-appointment processes: induction, mentoring and evaluation (statements 20 to 23).

Section C

Section C dealt with the consequences that the appointment process had on the functioning of the schools. These statements were all derived from Chapter three of this study. Their focus are as follows:

- The maintenance of traditions, values and the ethos of the schools (statements 41 and 42).
- The curriculum, quality issues and in-service training (statements 44 to 48).
- Relations between the principal and the SMT (statements 54 to 56).
- Relations between the principal, managers and the SGB (statements 57 to 59).
- The influence on learners (statements 62, 65 to 69).
- Relations between the principal and the educators, and the educators’ well-being (statements 43, 49 to 52).

- Relations between the principal and the non-educators (clerks, parents and members of the community) (statements 53, 61, 63, 70, 72 to 75 and 83).

4.4.2 Measures to ensure validity and reliability

According to Huysamen (1989:1-3), ‘validity’ and ‘reliability’ are two concepts that are very important in understanding issues of measurement in social science research. Kidder and Judd (1989:53) maintain that although reliability and validity are two different characteristics of measurement, they ‘shade into each other’. They are two ends of a continuum but at points in the middle it is difficult to distinguish between them. Valid survey instruments provide correct information and are always reliable.

(i) Validity of the questionnaire

Basic to the validity of a questionnaire is asking the right questions phrased in the least ambiguous way. Terms must be clearly defined so that they have the same meaning to all respondents (Cooper, 1989 :60-62).

By ‘validity’ is meant that the researcher’s conclusion is true and correct. Validity is the extent to which a measuring instrument satisfies the purpose for which it was constructed.

In the study on the process of appointment of education managers and its consequences for schools, the researcher ensured both the content and face validity of the research instrument (the questionnaire).

Content validity: Content validity refers to a survey which includes a battery of questions that are intended to measure different aspects of the same concept (Weisberg, *et al.*, 1996:95). Fink (1995:95) contends that for a questionnaire to have content validity, literature is consulted. Both the literature and the items in the questionnaire should cover the ‘full breadth’ of the theory on the research problem. For the purposes of this study, two separate literature researches were undertaken. For both the researcher consulted Education Acts, Bills, Circulars, White Papers, Journals and Bulletins, Government

Gazettes, Promotion Guidelines from Educator Unions, Education Management Manuals, and works from an array of leading authors on education leadership and management. The questionnaire items were based on information gained from these means. The researcher and the study supervisor checked the questionnaire items to determine if they adequately covered the content presented in the literature review. In this way it was ensured that the questionnaire had content validity.

Face validity: According to Weisberg *et al.* (1996:94) and Fink (1995:50), ‘face validity’ refers to the degree to which a questionnaire seems to measure the appropriate concept on the surface. The validity of the questionnaire as a research instrument used in this study reflects the convictions on which conclusions regarding the appointment process of education managers and its consequences for schools can be drawn. The researcher and the supervisor checked if all the questionnaire items tested what they were supposed to test (views on the appointment process and views on the consequences of the process for schools) – on the face of it. In this way it was ensured that the questionnaire had face validity. By establishing both the content and face validity of the research instrument the researcher improved the validity of his research results (Cooper, 1989:1200).

(ii) Reliability of the questionnaire

‘Reliability’ is a statistical concept that relates to the consistency of obtaining similar answers when measuring phenomena repeatedly (Fink, 1995:42; Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein 1994:512). An unreliable instrument is also invalid because accurate findings cannot be made with inconsistent data. On the other hand, the reliability of the questions is no proof that the answers given are a true reflection of the respondents’ feelings (Dane 1990:256). Sources of error that effect reliability are the following (Mulder, 1989:209; Kidder & Judd, 1986:45):

- Fluctuations in the mood and alertness of respondents because of illness, fatigue, recent good or bad experiences, or temporary differences amongst members of the group being measured.

- Variations in the conditions of administration between the groups. These range from various distractions, such as unusual noise, to inconsistencies in the administration of the measuring instrument, such as omissions in oral instructions.
- Differences in the scoring or interpretation of the results, chance differences in what the observer notices, and errors in computing scores.
- Random effects caused by the respondents who guess or check-off attitude alternatives without understanding them.

To enhance reliability, the researcher ensured that there were enough items in the questionnaire on each of the two issues at stake.

The reliability of the questionnaire used in this study was determined statistically by means of the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient. For Sections B and C of the survey this was 0,988, which is very good for this kind of questionnaire.

4.4.3 Pilot study

A 'pilot study' is an abbreviated version of a research project in which the researcher practises or tests the procedures to be used in the subsequent project (Dane, 1990:42). Kidder and Judd (1986:211-212) add that the basic purpose of a pilot study is to determine how the design of the study can be improved and to identify flaws in the measuring instrument. The number of participants in a pilot study or group is normally smaller than the number scheduled to take part in the final survey.

A pilot study for this research was undertaken, using a group of eight educators, all from the school where the researcher teaches. Of these educators, four are male and four female. Of the four male educators, two are education specialists and the other two are level one educators. The female respondents are all level one educators.

The respondents in the pilot study were in general satisfied with the contents of the questionnaire. They identified two typographical errors in the text. One of the education

specialists felt that educator morale is a pervasive issue and runs through the entire breadth of the research problem. In his opinion, educator morale ought to be compartmentalized in a separate category at the end of the questionnaire. Two respondents suggested that the order of three questions be changed (*i.e.*, question 82 be moved to position 62; question 80 to be moved to position 67, and question 79 be moved to position 66). Their reasons were that the questions were out of their respective categories in comparison to the other questions. The researcher saw merit in the suggestions of the respondents and changed the order of the questions accordingly. After the pilot study the researcher was satisfied that the questions complied adequately with the requirements of the study.

4.4.4 Administration of the questionnaire

Structured written questionnaires were delivered to principals of each school (rural, urban and township/sub-urban school) in KwaZulu-Natal. Permission (see Appendix B) to conduct the survey in the schools was obtained from the Department of Education and from the principals of the schools. The respondents are permanent educators who completed the questionnaires in their own time, but within one week. The anonymity of the respondents was guaranteed by the researcher. Thus research ethics were respected. Upon completion of the questionnaires, the researcher personally collected them from the schools.

4.4.5 Data processing

Once the data were collected, it was captured electronically and subjected to analysis and interpretation. For the survey, descriptive statistics were used. Descriptive statistics are sometimes referred to as 'summary' statistics. They are used to summarise, organise and reduce large numbers of observations to facilitate the making of conclusions (Huysamen, 1989:4).

4.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter, the planning and design of the empirical research was discussed and a detailed description was given of how the questionnaire as a research instrument was compiled. The study was conducted by making use of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was needed to obtain important and personal responses from educators from three geographically different types of secondary schools. The questionnaire was intended to examine the processes involved in recruiting, selecting and appointing education managers and the impact that these processes have on the functioning of the school.

The data obtained from the completed questionnaires will be analysed and presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present and discuss the results which were collected by means of questionnaires completed by respondents from three geographically different schools.

The three schools were purposefully chosen as follows: one rural school, one peri-urban school and one urban school.

5.2 RESEARCH PROBLEMS

The specific research problem was to ascertain what educators' views are on the manner that the appointment of education managers is conducted, and what the consequences of such appointments are on all the role-players in the school. Section B of the questionnaire consisted of 30 questions that dealt with the appointment process, and Section C consisted of 44 questions, which dealt with the consequences that the appointment process has on the functioning of the school.

5.3 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

The statistical techniques used to answer the research problems were frequencies and percentages. The percentages obtained by means of the survey will be discussed against the background of the literature review.

5.4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.4.1 Section A: Biographical data of respondents

The biographical data of the respondents appear in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Biographical data of respondents

Variable		Frequencies	Percentages
Gender:	Male	40	59.7
	Female	27	40.3
Age on 30 June 2008:	29 years and younger	6	9.0
	30 – 39 years	25	37.3
	40 – 49 years	26	38.8
	50 years and older	10	14.9
Experience in current position:	Less than one year	1	1.5
	1 – 5 years	7	10.4
	6 – 10 years	13	19.4
	More than 10 years	46	68.7
Qualifications:	Teaching certificate	1	1.5
	Teaching diploma	41	61.2
	Bachelors degree	38	56.7
	Masters degree	3	4.5
	Doctors degree	0	0
Current post:	Teacher/ educator	55	82.1
	Education Specialist	8	11.9
	Deputy Principal	2	3.0
	Principal	2	3.0
Area where school is located:	Rural	25	37.3
	Peri-urban	20	29.9
	Urban	22	32.8
Permanent educators:	15 educators or less	0	0
	16 to 25 educators	42	62.7
	26 to 35 educators	22	32.8
	More than 35 educators	3	4.5

Variable	Frequencies	Percentages
The principal of the school comes from:		
The local community	36	53.7
Another community	29	43.3
Uncertain	1	1.5
The principal performs his functions with professionalism:		
Seldom	22	32.8
Often	26	38.8
Always	16	23.9

5.4.1.1 Gender and age of respondents

Table 5.1 indicates that 59,7% of respondents were males and 40,3% females. The majority of teachers are female, both in KwaZulu-Natal and in the the country (Department of Education, 2008:16). However, males dominate the senior positions. From an equity perspective, this needs to be addressed. According to Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez (1997:197), most of the women hold the lower ranks in the teaching profession. This is mainly due to the historically racist and sexist ideology that precluded women from career progression. The Employment Equity Act, Act 55 of 1998, however, is aimed at addressing these gender inequalities.

The majority of respondents (53.7%) were middle-aged educators above the age of 40 years, 9% were under the age of 30. The remaining 37.3% of respondents were between 30 and 39 years old. The fact that the majority of educators were middle-aged indicate that these individuals would be in a good position to compare the processes involved in the appointment of education managers in both the pre- and post-democratic eras.

5.4.1.2 Experience, qualifications and current positions held

According to Table 5.1, more than two-thirds of the respondents (68.7%) had more than 10 years teaching experience. This could imply that some of the educators in the three areas may have had first-hand experience of the employment process.

With regard to qualifications, one respondent was in possession of a teaching certificate only, which is less than the minimum requirement to teach. This individual could have been a substitute educator. The other educators were suitably qualified. Some respondents were in possession of more than one teaching qualification. In the main, 62,2% of respondents were in possession of teaching diplomas, whilst 56.7% held Bachelors degrees and 4.5% Masters degrees.

With regard to the positions held at their schools, 82.1% of the respondents were post level 1 educators. The remaining 17.9%, were SMT members and their compositions were as follows: 11.9% education specialists; 3% deputy principals and 3% principals.

5.4.1.3 Location of the schools

The three schools were purposefully sampled: 37.3% of the respondents were from a rural school, 32.8% from an urban school and 29.9% from a peri-urban school.

5.4.1.4 Learner enrolment and staff appointment

Table 5.1 shows that 82.1% of the respondents came from large secondary schools with learner enrolments of more than 630. Such schools are classified as S1 or S2 schools. The rest of the learners were from a smaller secondary school with a learner enrolment of less than 630. Learner enrolments determine the staff appointment of schools: 62.7% of the respondents indicated that their schools had between 26 to 35 educators, whilst 37.3% indicated that their schools had about 26 educators.

5.4.1.5 The school principal

According to Table 5.1, 53.7% of the respondents indicated that the principal came from the local community whilst 43.3% indicated otherwise. This is in line with the viewpoint that for the post of principal SGBs favour candidates from within their local community,

which in turn tantamounts to gate-keeping that favours local applicants, and prejudices against candidates from elsewhere.

Respondents expressed mixed reactions, however, on the issue of principals' performances as school leaders, namely, 38.8% believed that the principals often performed their duties with a degree of professionalism and efficiency, while almost a third (32.8%) believed that this is not the case, and 23.9% believed that their principals always perform their tasks with a degree of professionalism and efficiency.

5.4.2 Section B: The appointment process

The views of the sample on the appointment process are presented in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Educators' views on the appointment process

	Statement	Disagree %	Uncertain %	Agree %
11	The DoE needs to train interview committees.			100
12	The minimum academic qualification for a principal should be a degree in Educational Management.	10.4	4.5	85.1
13	The minimum years of teaching experience for promotion to the post of principal should be 7 years.	13.4	4.5	82.1
14	Promotion of educators should be sequentially (i.e. from post level 1 to post level 2 to post level 3, etc.).	19.4	0	80.6
15	The SGB should recommend candidates for appointment, and the DoE should appoint them.	43.3	14.9	41.8
16	A single interview is sufficient for the SGB to make its choice of an education manager.	74.6	13.4	11.9
17	Short-listed candidates should be afforded the opportunity to visit the school for purposes of gathering information.	7.5	6.0	86.6
18	In the appointment of school principals, there should be more high ranking departmental officials present than there currently is.	6.0	1.5	92.5
19	The appointment process of principal/deputy principal should include performance contracts.	4.5	16.4	79.1
20	The DoE's induction programme is sufficient for newly appointed education managers to perform their functions.	55.2	34.3	10.4
21	The DoE provides adequate mentorship to its newly appointed education managers.	59.7	32.8	7.5
22	Mentors themselves are trained and skilled in education	26.9	53.7	19.4

	Statement	Disagree %	Uncertain %	Agree %
	management/ leadership.			
23	The DoE evaluates the performances of all education managers with a view to improve practice.	31.3	40.3	28.4
24	Pre-service training with certification for managers would prepare better leaders.	3.0	3.0	94.0
25	There is a demographic representation of parents on the SGB.	47.8	14.9	37.3
26	The SGB recruits the most suitable candidates to fill vacant managerial positions at school.	68.7	11.9	19.4
27	The SGB chairperson influences other members of the SGB when it comes to choosing candidates for promotion posts.	20.9	25.4	53.7
28	Sectionalism plays a role in the selection of candidates for promotion posts at my school.	11.9	38.8	47.8
29	Belonging to the same religious group is a factor that is taken into account when selecting candidates for promotion posts at my school.	34.3	29.9	35.8
30	Belonging to the same political party influences the choice of candidates for promotion posts at my school.	34.3	25.4	40.3
31	Race plays a role in the selection of candidates for promotion at my school.	19.4	28.4	52.2
32	The competency levels of members of the interview panel are suitable for the job of selecting candidates for promotion posts at my school.	76.1	14.9	9.0
33	The SGB discusses the suitability of its choice of candidate/s before making recommendations to the DoE.	26.9	49.3	23.9
34	Applicants with impressive curriculum vitae (CVs) get short-listed above other candidates.	4.5	16.4	79.1
35	Candidates with fluent verbal skills get chosen above those who are not so fluent.	4.5	16.4	79.1
36	Listening as a skill needed for interviews is well mastered by the SGB.	52.2	31.3	16.4
37	The SGB verifies information on CVs by contacting referees whose names appear in the CVs.	37.3	47.8	14.9
38	The SGB generally chooses candidates from within the school rather than from elsewhere.	32.8	26.9	38.8
39	All candidates receive the same treatment by the SGB during the interview process.	29.9	49.3	19.4
40	In the final selection, male candidates are generally preferred to female candidates at my school.	37.3	31.3	31.3

5.4.2.1 *Minimum academic requirements and experience* (statements 12, 13, 14 and 24)

According to Table 5.2, the vast majority of respondents (85.1%) were of the opinion that the minimum academic qualification for principals should be a degree in Education Management. At present, the minimum academic qualification for the post of principal is M+3 (or REQV 13) (ELRC, 2003: 73). A M+3 qualification is the minimum qualification for entering the teaching profession. As the duties and responsibilities of an educator and an education manager are, to a large extent, mutually exclusive, it is necessary for a distinction to be drawn between the qualification requirements for the two positions. As from 2007 the Department of Education has embarked on a programme to upgrade the professional qualifications of serving (under-qualified) principals. The qualification is called the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) and is currently being piloted in conjunction with selected institutions of higher learning in South Africa (*cf.* 2.2.3).

With regard to teaching experience, 82.1% of the respondents agreed with the statement that the minimum number of years' teaching experience for promotion to the post of principal should be seven years. This should be compared to the requirement of at least 20 years' experience in the USA (*cf.* 2.2.2). However, this requirement is in addition to the above, namely a degree with specialisation in Education Management.

Regarding level-hopping, the vast majority of respondents (80.6%) were of the opinion that the promotion of educators should be done sequentially, i.e., from post level 1 to post level 2 to post level 3, etc. (see Table 5.2.) In other words, there should be no level-hopping. The rationale behind this could be that each level provides different learning opportunities that equip and empower candidates in preparation for principalship eventually. Only 19.4% of respondents believed that level-hopping should be allowed. Their decision could perhaps be based on merit selection as there are (and always will be) candidates who show rare skills and talents who are aspiring towards positions where they probably would excel in. However, such situations need to be congruent with proven

assessments (such as IQMS), the requisite qualifications, and their track records proving competence. The adjudication of the suitability of such candidates needs broader definition and caution.

An overwhelming 94% of the respondents were of the opinion that pre-service training with certification for managers would prepare better leaders. This would be relevant more to the senior management of schools, *i.e.* principals and deputy principals since they are responsible for the overall running of the school. Education specialists (who comprise the remainder of the SMT) are primarily responsible for the supervision and control of specific learning areas. Pre-service training with certification for principalships in particular, would empower aspirant leaders with the skills, knowledge, attitude and values that the position of principal demands. Such initiatives would assist SGBs to make more reasoned choices, taking into account the abilities, capacities and aspirations of incumbents to principalships. Pre-service training is generally conducted by leadership academies in the UK and USA (Winter *et al.*, 2005:299; Chauncey, 2005:126). Such institutions do not exist in South Africa.

5.4.2.2 *The short-listing of candidates* (statements 26, 34 and 37 and 17)

According to Table 5.2, 68.7% of the respondents in the survey believed that their SGBs do not recruit the most suitable candidates to fill vacant managerial positions at their schools. According to evidence, SGBs may be threatened by overbearing fellow members into short-listing certain candidates, or they may perhaps honestly believe that they are selecting the best possible candidate from the pool. Only 19.4% agree that SGBs choose the most suitable candidate. These respondents could be those who themselves were selected by SGBs to promotion posts, *i.e.*, current SMT members.

Seventy nine % of respondents believed that applicants with impressive CVs get short-listed above other candidates. According to informal interviews with colleagues, in many instances the CVs are compiled by professionals who charge a fee. Information contained in CVs are often fabricated to suit a specific end. Forty seven % of the respondents

indicated that they were uncertain as to whether the SGB verifies information on CVs by contacting referees whose names appear on the CVs. A further 37.3% of respondents maintained that SGBs do not contact referees for CV verification at all. Short-listed candidates are presently not afforded any opportunity to visit the schools for the purpose of obtaining information. Eighty six percent of the respondents believe that short-listed candidates should be afforded the opportunity to do so. Possible reasons for this could be to ascertain whether they would be able to function effectively in terms of the cultural and language needs of the community (Department of Education, 2008:2). Seven percent of respondents believed otherwise. Their reasons were that candidates may be discouraged from attending the interview should they not be happy about what they see at the school. However, schools need to be open and transparent about their characteristics and ethos, to prevent appointed candidates to want to decline their posts after a few weeks.

5.4.2.3 *The interview process* (statements 11, 16, 32, 35, 36 and 39).

One of the merits of the interview is to identify the most suitable candidate for a vacant position (Pather, 1995:6). Regarding the training of interview committees, the respondents were unanimous (100% agreed) that the Department of Education needs to train interview committees. SGBs change all the time and it becomes necessary to train and empower new incumbents on a regular basis. At present, in view of the illiteracy levels in many communities, members of SGBs are required to be empowered through a series of workshops and made to understand the importance of the selection process.

The present system of educator promotions involves a single interview only. According to Table 5.2, 74.6% of respondents disagreed that the single interview is sufficient for the SGB to make its choice. These respondents seemed of the opinion that a single meeting with a candidate (generally 20 minutes) cannot be sufficient to make an informed choice. Only 11.9% were of the view that a single interview was indeed sufficient.

By being entrusted with the all-important task of selecting education managers, SGBs are, in effect, mapping out the future of the schools. In order to perform this task, SGB members need to be competent in all the stages and phases of the appointment process. However, 76.1% of respondents disagreed that the competency levels of members of the SGB are suitable for the job of selecting candidates for promotion posts at their schools. Such a finding has far-reaching consequences, as will be discussed later in Section C, and lends credence to the findings of Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002:42) who maintain that only a few SGB members have a clear grasp of the tasks and responsibilities of serving in the SGB, and therefore may select candidates on dubious grounds.

Regarding speaking skills, the present interview system used for the selection of candidates for promotion posts favour those who are skilled in speech, and can 'spin a good line' (Blackmore, *et al.*, 2006:303). Observation has indicated that eloquence is by no means an indicator of dedication. The vast majority of respondents (79.1%) are of the notion that candidates with fluent verbal skills get chosen for management positions above those who are not so fluent in speech. Only 4.5% of respondents disagreed with the statement.

Regarding listening skills, interviews are orientated around the spoken word and interview committees need to take heed of the responses of candidates during interviews. It is a skill that demonstrates the ability of an individual to differentiate between stimuli, in this case, responses of interviewees. Listening also entails other visual clues such as facial expressions, body postures, gestures and tone of voice (Martin, 1993:80-82). Fifty two percent of respondents in the survey disagreed that listening as a skill is well mastered by the SGB. In the South African context, listening with comprehension is a challenge to many, in view of the differences in mother-tongue, levels of education and literacy, and general understanding of practices and procedures in education. Only 16.4% believed that the SGB had, in fact, mastered the skill of listening during interviews.

With regard to the treatment of candidates during interviews, the majority of the respondents (49.3%) were uncertain as to whether all candidates were treated alike,

whilst 29.9% did not believe that all candidates received the same treatment. This finding, therefore, lends credence to the belief that the SGBs need training and possible certification to show competence in the appointment of education managers. The uncertainty that prevails among candidates can be attributed to the secrecy clause that prohibits intra-interview discussions from becoming public knowledge (Department Of Education, 2008:9).

5.4.2.4 *Selection and recommendation, and the role of bias* (statements 25 to 31; 33, 38 and 40)

SGBs comprise of parents or caregivers whose children attend a specific school. Parents/caregivers are permitted to be the majority of the SGB. A demographic representation of parents is necessary for the aspirations of the various race groups to be ascertained. However, Table 5.2 indicates that the majority of respondents in the survey (47.8%) disagreed that there was a demographic representation of parents on the SGB. The advent of democracy in South Africa would appear not to have translated into racial egalitarianism in the compositions of SGBs. However, 37.3% of respondents believed that demographic representation was present in their SGBs. This could probably be in the peri-urban school where racial intermingling is believed to be more prevalent than is perhaps the case in the urban or rural areas.

It is generally believed that the SGB chairperson wields the greatest influence in the SGB by virtue of his office (Adams & Waghid, 2005:31). This view is corroborated by 53.7% of respondents who believe that the SGB chairperson influences the other members of the SGB when it comes to choosing candidates for promotion posts. This would mean that the integrity of the selection processes is under question. Close on 21% of respondents disagreed with the statement. This may be attributed to the fact that promotion post holders also participated in the survey and would not want to believe that their promotions were unduly influenced. The uncertainty of the remaining 25.4% of the respondents may be attributed to the ignorance of some educators to the perceived prevalence of such practices by SGB members.

In making selections, unfair biases may play a role. When the appointments of the educators are made in a manner that favours candidates by virtue of belonging to a specific cohort, the credibility of the appointment process comes into question (Adams & Waghid, 2005:31). Table 5.2 shows that 47.8% of the respondents believed that in the appointment of education managers, sectionalism played a role, whereas 38.8% of respondents were uncertain as to whether this was true or not.

With regard to selecting candidates who belong to the same religious group for promotion posts, 35.8% of respondents agreed that this played a role, while 34.3% of the respondents did not believe that candidates were selected on grounds of their religious affiliations.

However, belonging to a specific political party appears to be a factor that most respondents (40.3%) believed plays a role in the appointment of education managers. The political landscape in urban, peri-urban and rural areas differ and it would appear that loyalty to political parties in the respective areas plays a role in the selection of education managers. In contrast, 34.3% of the respondents did not believe that politics played a role in the appointment of education managers.

As regards race, 52.2% of the respondents agreed that race played a role in the selection of candidates for promotion at their schools. This would imply that the educational landscape is not free from racial bias. The selection of candidates on merit may become subservient to race. In this regard, the Department of Education makes it clear in its promotion communiqués that "...applicants are advised to be realistic when submitting applications for posts by taking cognisance of ... the ability to function effectively in terms of the cultural and language needs of the community" (Department Of Education, 2008: 2).

The majority of respondents (37.3%) disagreed that male candidates were generally preferred to female candidates at their schools. However, almost a third of the respondents (31.3%) agreed with the statement, or were uncertain. This finding is

somewhat inconsistent with the established conclusions that males predominate in SMTs whilst females are numerically more 'outside' the SMT's (Winter *et al.*, 2005:302). In accordance with the male/female ratios in Kwazulu-Natal, female educators outnumber males in every race group (Department Of Education, 2008: 16). However, in the appointment process, male educators get preference. Thakathi and Lemmer (2002:193) concur, and maintain that male dominance in education management is a world-wide phenomenon.

The above-mentioned findings of the survey with regards to gender equity confirm, to a large extent, those of Karlsson (2002:332-335). He maintains that race, gender, level of education, geographic location and politics all play a role in the selection of members to serve on SGBs and who consequently select candidates for promotion posts at the school.

The belief that the SGBs generally choose candidates from within the school rather than from elsewhere is supported by 38.8% of the respondents, of whom 32.8% disagreed with the statement whilst 26.9% were uncertain. While it is the prerogative of the SGBs to hire expertise from any source, selecting from a 'closed shop' would imply automatic succession to a promotion post, and even, more suitable candidates get marginalised, in favour of a populous candidate (Blackmore *et al.*, 2006:305). Such practises could be seen as unfair and prejudicial.

The question as to whether the SGB discusses its choice of candidates before making recommendations to the Department of Education, was supported by only 26.9% of respondents. Possible reasons for this could be (Department of Education, 2008:8-9):

- the secrecy clause in the promotion document prohibits discussion relating to the appointment process; and
- educator representatives serving on SGBs generally recuse themselves from certain deliberations due to vested interests, etc.

The majority of respondents (49.3%) were uncertain.

5.4.2.5 *The appointment process* (statements 15, 18 and 19)

According to Table 5.2, 43.3% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that the SGB should recommend candidates for the Department of Education to appointment. Possible reasons for the disagreement could be linked to the belief that SGBs are not capable of selecting candidates due to an array of factors (Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2002:43). Also, the view that the SGBs generally appoint candidates in accordance with their wishes, reduces the Department of Education to being a mere rubber stamp. However, an almost equal percentage (41.8%) of respondents agreed with the statement. Inherent in this group's thinking could perhaps be the fact that the elected representatives serving on the SGB are people of integrity with impeccable credentials and capable of selecting the best possible candidate for the post.

By virtue of their job descriptions in the education hierarchy, the presence of high-ranking departmental officials during interviews for the principalship is mandatory, as many of these officials had served as school principals previously. This view is shared by 92.5% of the respondents who believe that there should be more high ranking departmental officials present at interviews for the post of principal than is currently the case. According to McPherson (1999:90), designated officials of the Department of Education with special training in and knowledge of selection techniques for senior management should be involved in the selection of secondary school principals. The expertise of these skilled officials should be developed to the extent of their counterparts in commerce and industry. If necessary, the Department of Education should recruit external consultants to train, equip and empower officials of the Department, who in turn, would oversee the appointment process of school principals (*ibid*).

The signing of performance contracts on appointment is mandatory in both the state and private sectors, but not in schools. The schools' senior management comprising of the principal and deputy principal are the main custodians of the professional running of the school. Nearly 80% of the respondents believed that the appointment process of the schools' senior management should include performance contracts. According to

Hertling (1999:1), performance contracts should not be designed to place undue pressure on candidates. Instead, it should be linked to administrative responsibilities such as demonstrating budgetary acuity, improving school safety, offering staff development opportunities, designing a challenging curriculum, maximising parent-community involvement in schools, and improving learner attendance and graduation rates. In addition, performance contracts would serve to encourage compliance from principals and deputy principals to maintain and/or improve on the expected levels of their performances, and also to deter candidates who are ambitious but ill-prepared from applying for senior positions.

5.4.2.6 Post-appointment processes: induction, mentoring and evaluation (statements 20 to 23)

According to Table 5.2, 55.2% of respondents were of the opinion that the Department of Education's induction programme is not sufficient for newly appointed education managers to perform their functions. Possible reasons for this could be that induction is not seen as a priority by either the Department of Education or the SGB. A comprehensive induction package for newly appointed principals would, according to Gronn (1999:16), assist principals to overcome shock and uncertainty, and promote adjustment, consolidation and integration. While 10.4% of respondents believed that the induction programme was sufficient, 34.3% of respondents were uncertain.

With regard to mentorship, 59.7% of respondents believed that the Department of Education does not provide adequate mentorship for its newly appointed education managers. A further 32.8% of respondents were uncertain on the issue. A probable reason for this relatively high degree of uncertainty could be the covert nature of mentoring. While Kitavi and Van der Westhuizen (1997:261) regard mentorship as a panacea for many problems facing new principals, the Department of Education only uses mentorship in times of under- or non-performance of principals. Mentorship programs ought to be ongoing for purposes of ensuring continuity of leadership.

A high degree of uncertainty (53.7%) also prevails as to whether mentors themselves are trained and skilled in education management and leadership. Muze *et al.*(1992:317), indicate that mentors of principals also ought to undergo training and evaluation, as ‘good’ principals may not necessarily be good mentors. This view is shared by Kirkpartick (2000:43) and Villani (2006:13) who feel that mentors of principals need to be certified before they are granted mentor status.

The majority of respondents (40.3%) were uncertain as to whether the Department of Education evaluates the performances of education managers with a view to improve practice. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (NCSL, 2006:29) maintains that performance evaluation is a compulsory requirement to measure whether appointed candidates are in compliance with their mandates at the time of their appointment to vacant posts. Evaluation is an important tool to measure whether appointed candidates are in fact ‘walking the talk’. Only 28.4% of the respondents were of the view that the Department of Education is employing evaluation strategies.

5.4.3 SECTION C: THE INFLUENCE OF EDUCATION MANAGERS ON THE FUNCTIONING OF SCHOOLS AND ON EDUCATOR MORALE

The views of the respondents on the consequences of the appointment of education managers are presented in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Educators' views on the consequences of the appointment process

	Statement	Disagree %	Uncertain %	Agree %
41	Newly appointed principals uphold the values/ethos of the school.	35.8	34.3	29.9
42	Newly appointed principals maintain the traditions of the school.	41.8	26.9	31.3
43	Post level 1 educators co-operate fully with newly appointed managers at the school.	34.3	28.4	37.3
44	Educators are favourably disposed towards quality assurance as it is currently carried out by education managers.	52.2	23.9	22.4
45	Education managers carry out quality assurance processes in a competent manner.	47.8	23.9	28.4
46	Education managers inform educators about in-service training.	13.4	20.9	64.2
47	Education managers encourage educators to attend in-service training.	11.9	20.9	67.2
48	The principal prioritizes curriculum delivery at my school.	31.3	14.9	52.2
49	Education managers keep stressors such as extra duties to a minimum at my school.	41.8	19.4	38.8
50	Education managers keep stressors such as extra paperwork to a minimum at my school.	55.2	10.4	32.8
51	Education managers create opportunities for educators to work collaboratively with their peers to enhance their leadership abilities.	25.4	25.4	49.3
52	Education managers involve educators in meaningful decision-making at my school.	38.8	14.9	44.8
53	The principal successfully delegates tasks to the administration clerks of the school.	19.4	22.4	58.2
54	The principal successfully delegates duties and responsibilities to the deputy principal at my school.	29.9	20.9	49.3
55	The principal enjoys cordial relations with the deputy principal at my school.	26.9	19.4	53.7
56	The principal enjoys cordial relations with the education specialists at my school.	20.9	35.8	41.8
57	There is a good working relationship between the principal and members of the SGB at my school.	43.3	35.8	20.9
58	The SMT and the SGB of my school work together in addressing school issues.	50.7	26.9	22.4
59	Finances are well managed by the principal/SGB.	38.8	37.3	23.9
60	Education managers provide adequate support services to non-educators at school.	26.9	40.3	29.9
61	Education managers ensure that both the educator and non-educator personnel work in harmony for the smooth functioning of the school.	26.9	25.4	47.8
62	Education managers provide support services to learners at my school on an ongoing basis.	32.8	23.9	43.3
63	Education managers enlist the services of public institutions (e.g. libraries, museums, etc.) for the benefit of learners.	52.2	17.9	29.9
64	Educators have the freedom to explore strategies to enhance learner achievement at my school.	19.4	14.9	65.7
65	Learners are afforded the opportunity to make suggestions on educational issues.	37.3	14.9	47.8

	Statement	Disagree %	Uncertain %	Agree %
66	Bad discipline of learners is handled well by the principal.	55.2	14.9	29.9
67	The principal deals with learner violence in a fair manner.	37.3	25.4	37.3
68	The principal ensures that learners who are socially disadvantaged are adequately taken care of at my school.	23.9	41.8	34.3
69	The principal ensures that learners who are financially disadvantaged are adequately taken care of at my school.	19.4	37.3	43.3
70	Education managers take time to understand the community well.	37.3	37.3	23.9
71	The principal handles challenges relating to race relations well.	29.9	34.3	35.8
72	Education managers find people in the parent community to serve as cultural and linguistic bridges to improve parent-educator relations at my school.	62.7	23.9	13.4
73	Opportunities exist at my school for parents to develop their skills, such as literacy, numeracy and computer skills.	67.2	13.4	19.4
74	Education managers create opportunities for parents to interact freely with the school to promote the best interests of learners.	22.4	23.9	53.7
75	Group decision-making involving both educators and parents takes place at my school.	44.8	22.4	32.8
76	My morale is high.	68.7	11.9	17.9
77	The present system of educator promotions has raised the morale of educators at my school.	80.6	13.4	6.0
78	The morale among female educators is higher than among male educators.	52.2	32.8	14.9
79	The principal includes educators in decision-making at my school.	29.9	11.9	58.2
80	The principal takes time to understand the needs of educators.	32.8	25.4	40.3
81	Education managers afford educators the freedom to work creatively with learners.	19.4	25.4	55.2
82	The most important influence on educator morale is the caring attitude of education managers.	37.3	11.9	50.7
83	Education managers ensure parent involvement in learner activities after school hours (e.g. homework control)	37.3	28.4	34.3
84	The principal makes educators feel valued.	35.8	17.9	46.3

5.4.3.1 *The maintenance of the traditions, values and ethos of the school* (statements 41 and 42)

According to Table 5.3, respondents were divided on whether newly appointed principals uphold the values and ethos of schools. More than a third of the respondents (35.8%) disagreed that this was the case. An almost equal percentage of respondents (34.3%) were uncertain. These findings are congruent with the dynamics of transition that are prevalent in schools and other public institutions at present. Paradigms in education are changing in line with the political and socio-economic changes in the country and principals are compelled by circumstances to keep pace with the changes (Van der Westhuizen & Legotlo, 1996:69). The same would apply to the traditions of the schools. Approximately 42 % of the respondents were of the opinion that newly appointed principals do not maintain the traditions of the schools, while 31.3% thought that they do. However, it would be easy to apportion the deviance from the previously established traditions, values and ethos of schools solely on external factors, without carefully considering the type of principals that are being appointed at schools, as this is what defines the strategic leadership skills of the principal (Portin, 2004:17).

5.4.3.2 *Curriculum, quality issues and in-service training* (statements 44 to 48)

Quality assurance refers to the process whereby educators are evaluated on the quality of their delivery both inside and outside the classrooms to assess whether successful educational outcomes are achieved (Soman, 2006:xvi). Education managers are expected to conduct quality assurance in a transparent, accountable, supportive, developmental and inclusive manner. However, Table 5.3 illustrates that the majority of respondents (52.2%) believed that educators are not impressed by the quality assurance as it is currently carried out by education managers.

Furthermore, 47.8% of the educators maintain that education managers do not carry out quality assurance processes in a competent manner, and 28.4% of the respondents believed that education managers carry out quality assurance processes competently. The

Quality Assurance Process (IQMS) is a most comprehensive manner to determine the quality of teaching and learning services, and mediocre performances by education managers is lamentable. It casts serious aspersions on the credibilities of education managers and their appointments to positions of management.

About two-thirds of the respondents (64.2%) believed that education managers inform educators about in-service training, and a further two-thirds (67.2%) mentioned that education managers encourage educators to attend in-service training. This commendable since in-service training courses serve to equip and strengthen educators in areas where they need help, especially in those areas that concern new subject matter. However, 20.9% of respondents were uncertain as to whether education managers inform educators about in-service training.

As instructional leader, the principal needs to prioritise curriculum delivery at school (Black, 2001:41-42). The delivery of the curriculum is the cornerstone of a school's existence as the careers of learners are often fashioned from the subject matter they learn at school. In the schools surveyed, about half (52.2%) of the respondents believed that the school principals prioritise curriculum delivery at their schools. However, the fact that almost a third of the respondents (31.3%) believed otherwise, implies that some principals appear not to be doing their duty. The SGBs need to take some responsibility for the non-performance of principals, who were the candidates of their choice.

5.4.3.3 *Relations between the principal and the SMT* (statements 54 to 56)

Table 5.3 illustrates that 49.3% of the respondents believed that their principals successfully delegated duties and responsibilities to the deputy principal of the school. There is an arbitrary distinction between the duties and responsibilities of the principal and those of the deputy principal (Department of Education, 1998:24), as the latter deputises for the principal in his/her absence from school. It is the function of the principal to delegate tasks, based on the principles of consultation, reasonableness and equity, to the deputy principal (*ibid*).

The principal needs to foster harmonious working relations between the various role-players, beginning with the SMT. In the survey, 53.7% of respondents agreed that the principal enjoyed cordial relations with the deputy principal of the school. This is generally the case when the principal is appointed from within the ranks of the SMTs, *i.e.*, in instances when candidates' credibilities are well established in the teaching fraternity. However, in instances where principals are selected from within the ranks of level 1 classroom practitioners, as has happened in certain cases (*cf.* 1.1), the scenario is often very different. This could have been the sentiments of the 26.9% of respondents who disagreed with the statement that the principal enjoys cordial relations with the deputy principal of the school.

A similar picture to the above is evident with regard to the relations between the principal and the education specialists, where 41.8% of respondents mentioned that the principal enjoyed cordial relations with the education specialists, whilst 20.9% disagreed. More than a third (35.8%) of respondents were uncertain. It needs to be noted that disharmony in the ranks of the SMT is invariably exploited by post level 1 educators, much to the detriment of the schools.

5.4.3.4 *Relations between the principal and the education managers and the SGB* (statements 57 to 59)

The SGB selects the principal of a school, and by virtue of his office, the principal becomes an *ex officio* member of the SGB. A symbiotic relationship ought to prevail between the principal and the SGB whereby the principal spearheads the professional running of the school, whilst the SGB assumes its duties as outlined in the Schools Act (Robinson & Ward 2005:183). However, the majority of respondents (43.3%) disagreed that there was a good working relationship between the principal and SGB, with 35.8% of the respondents being uncertain. Furthermore, 50.7% of the respondents disagreed that the SMT and the SGB of their schools work together in addressing school issues. The perceived polarised working relationship between the SGB and the SMT would militate

against the smooth running of the school as conflict situations would predominate over co-operation and meaningful involvement.

An important prerogative of the principal and the SGB is the management of the school's finances (Bolton, 2000:8; Department of Education, 2007:12). Secondary schools receive state funding in accordance with the ranking of the school. Lower income schools ('poor schools') receive proportionally higher funding than do higher income schools. The management of the school's finances ought to be done parsimoniously, in accordance with the needs of the school. The majority of respondents (38.8%) disagreed that the principal and SGB managed the finances of the school well. A further 37.3% of the respondents were uncertain. An injudicious use of finances has a negative impact on schools, as the acquisition of important educational resources for the promotion of teaching and learning is hampered.

5.4.3.5 *Influence on learners* (statements 62, 65 to 69)

Table 5.3 indicates that 43.3% of the respondents believed that education managers provided support services to learners on an ongoing basis. Support services generally include

- extra classes during breaks, week-ends and over holidays;
- the provision of learner support materials such as previous-year question papers, *etc.*;
- enlisting the services of tutors in the so-called 'scarce'-skilled subjects;
- obtaining financial aid for indigent learners;
- inviting guest speakers to the school to brief learners on issues relating to careers, and health-related issues, amongst others.

However, almost a third of the respondents (32.8%) disagreed with the statement. The respondents may perhaps have been from the rural (peri-urban) school where circumstances generally prevent education managers from providing the above-

mentioned services. The dichotomy between rural and urban schools has been adequately indicated in 1.1.

Learners in secondary schools are expected to elect a Representative Council of Learners who have representation on the SGB. This implies learner participation in the educational issues at their schools. Nearly half of the respondents in the survey believed that learners were afforded opportunities to make suggestions on educational issues at their schools. However, more than a third of the respondents (37.3%) disagreed that learners were afforded such opportunities. In such instances, education managers are denying learners new avenues for development, and are in fact acting in bad faith.

Bad learner-discipline appears to be on the rise in secondary schools (*cf.* 3.3.1.2), and is presenting the role-players in education with daunting challenges. Learner ill-discipline manifests itself in violations such as drug abuse, teenage sex, absenteeism and/or bunking classes, not completing tasks and non-compliance to the school's Code of Conduct (Dibetle, 2008:7; Davids & Makwabe, 2007:1). Level 1 classroom practitioners generally refer such cases to the principal or other education managers for attention. However, 55.2% of the respondents in the survey believed that learner ill-discipline was not well handled by the principal. As discipline is a fore-runner to scholastic achievement, the principal needs to ensure compliance to the schools' Code of Conduct in order for meaningful teaching and learning to take place. Almost 30% of the respondents thought that their principals handled ill-discipline well, whilst 14.9% were uncertain.

In the recent past learner violence in South African schools has spiralled almost out of control (Dibetle, 2008:7; Davids & Makwabe, 2007:1). On the question whether the principal dealt with learner violence in a fair manner, respondents were divided – 37.3% agreeing and 37.3% disagreeing with the statement. As heads of schools, it is expected from principals to ensure that schools are safe environments for educators to teach and learners to learn. Respondents who agreed that principals acted decisively against violence in schools, said so perhaps by observing the principals perform their tasks without fear, favour or prejudice by displaying managerial and strategic (*cf.* 3.2.2.3), as

well as assertive and Maverick leadership (Hayward, 2008:12). In such instances, the appointment of principals with vision, talent and commitment is lauded. The converse holds true, however, in instances where principals were believed to be doing the opposite.

The ravages of sicknesses and diseases such as HIV/Aids together with poverty, deprivation and other destabilising factors, result in learners becoming victims at school, both socially and financially (Dommissie 2008:9; Buchel & Hoberg 2007:12-13). Learners lose perspective on achieving at school if the learning environment is hostile to them or if their basic human needs (the provision of food, water, clothing, shelter, etc.) are not met. Only a third of the respondents (34.3%) agreed with the statement that the principal ensured that learners who are socially disadvantaged were adequately taken care of at school. Many respondents (41.8%) were uncertain.

With regard to the financial position of learners, 43.3% of respondents believe that learners who were financially disadvantaged were adequately taken care of by the school, as opposed to 19.4% who disagreed. A possible reason for this could be that schools may not deny learners opportunities for learning based on their parents' inability to pay fees. Thirty seven percent of the respondents indicated that they were uncertain as to whether the school catered adequately for financially disadvantaged learners.

5.4.3.6 Relations between the principal and the educators and the educators' well-being (statements 43, 49 to 52; 60, 64, 71, 76, 77, 79 to 82; 84)

The level of co-operation between education managers and educators is crucial to the principles of peace, prosperity and progress at school. The school's vision, mission and goals stand in jeopardy if co-operation between the education managers and educators is non-existent. Table 5.3 shows that respondents in the survey were divided on the issue, with 37.3% agreeing that post level one educators co-operated with the newly appointed managers at school, and 34.3% disagreeing. A further 28.4% were uncertain.

Stress is considered to be a psycho-social killer in present day society (Cooper & Dewe, 2004:110). It contributes to a multitude of health problems and impacts negatively on the delivery of quality education at school. Contributory factors towards stress at school originate both from within, and from outside school, and it becomes the task of the education managers to control stressors as far as possible. Forty one percent of the respondents in the survey did not think that education managers keep stressors, such as extra duties, to a minimum at school, while 38.8% agreed with the statement. As far as extra paperwork as a contributory factor to stress is concerned, 55.2% of respondents disagreed that education managers are doing enough to keep stress under control. Filling out forms, completing documents, “unnecessary” analyses, and reports from the employer, burden and frustrate educators and cause stress. Outcomes Based Education (OBE) also requires educators to complete volumes of paperwork, which often seems worthless (Daniels 2007:7; Spady 2008:22).

Many respondents (49.3%), believed that education managers create opportunities for educators to work collaboratively with their peers to enhance their leadership abilities. This would imply that educators are afforded opportunities for leadership development. It is a common perception that leaders are made, not born. Hence, in addition to providing supervision and support services, guidance, motivation and encouragement (*cf.* 3.3.1.3), education managers need to create empowerment opportunities to ensure future growth, development and sustainability. Twenty five percent of the respondents disagreed that education managers create opportunities for leadership development.

Joint decision-making is an important component in any democracy (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001:8). Whilst a significant group of respondents (44.8%) believed that education managers involve educators in meaningful decision-making at school, a high percentage (38.8%) believed otherwise. In the case of the latter, educators may feel disillusioned by the exclusionary practises of education managers which may consequently lead to unnecessary tension between educators and managers. Tension is generally counterproductive to the realisation of the goals of education.

According to Table 5.3, 65.7% of respondents believed that educators have the freedom to explore strategies to enhance learner achievement at their schools. However, despite this, learner achievement in the Senior Certificate Examination over the past few years has shown a downward trend (Smith 2007:1). The role of education managers in ensuring educator performance in the classroom comes into question when learners perform poorly. However, in the present climate, the teaching-learning environment is largely responsible for the decline in matric results in several schools (*cf.* 3.3.1.2). This could account for the opinion of those respondents (19.4%) that in their schools educators are not able to explore strategies to improve learner performance.

On the question of race relations, there were mixed reactions as to whether the principal handled challenges relating to race relations well. Only 35.8% of the respondents believed that their principals did. More than a third of the respondents (34.3%) were uncertain, with 29.9% disagreeing. Race continues to play a role in the selection of education managers (*cf.* statement 31).

There existed consensus in respect of the statement that a happy educator is a productive educator (Evans, 2001:291). The morale of happy and productive educators is generally high as these educators are intrinsically motivated and view their jobs as a calling, not just as a vocation. More than two-thirds of the respondents (68.7%) indicated that their morale is low. The vast majority of the respondents (80.6%) believed that the present system of educator promotions is related to low educator morale at the schools. This would imply that the present system of educator promotions needs to be revised.

Table 5.3 illustrates that 52.2 % of the respondents disagreed that the morale among female educators was higher than among their male counterparts. Possible reasons for this could be (Sunday Times, 2007:24; Davids & Makwabe, 2007:1; Mohlala, 2007:1):

- the recent labour unrest in education (*i.e.* the largest educator strike in June 2007);
- the docking of educator salaries despite the intensive ‘recovery plan’ that educators subsequently embarked upon to cover syllabi and complete assessments for learners’ benefit; and

- high levels of stress emanating from violent and unpredictable learner behaviour, non-cooperative conduct from learners and parents, and apathy from the employer to improve the working conditions of the educators.

Close to 60% of the respondents in the survey agreed that their principals included them in decision-making at school. However, almost 30% (*i.e.* 29.9%) believed they were excluded from the decision-making process. Consensus decision-making is an important hallmark of participatory democracy, and principals who exercise autocratic leadership styles, or who exclude educator participation often create tension and conflict. This lowers the educators' morale and could possibly account for the reason why only 40.3% of educators in the survey believed that the principal takes time to understand their needs, and about one-third (32.8%) of the respondents believed that he did not at all.

In addition to the principal, the deputy principal and education specialists also play significant roles in determining the morale of educators. Fifty five percent of the respondents indicated that education managers afforded them the freedom to work creatively with learners, while 50.7% agreed that the caring attitude of education managers influenced their morale at school. However, more than a third of the respondents (37.3%) disagreed with the statement that the most important influence on educator morale was the caring attitudes of education managers. Education managers who were perceived as non-chalant, overbearing or undemocratic tended to add to educators' stress levels and invariably lower the morale of educators.

Educators and parents complement each other in the education of children (Clark & Dorris, 2006:252). It is an accepted fact that the school is an extension of the home. Motivated parents stimulate learners to excel, and this in turn encourages the educators. In the survey, however, 37.3% of the respondents denied that education managers ensured parental involvement in the schools' activities. Apathy in parents to be involved in the affairs of the school may not necessarily be attributed to the school itself. Rather, extraneous factors relating to socio-economic issues, finances and the availability of transport (especially in rural areas) often prevent parents from participating in school

matters. The 34.3% respondents who agreed with the statement, namely that managers involved parents in learner activities after school, may have been from the urban areas where circumstances appear to be more favourable.

Educators are implementers of education policies, and as an instructional leader, the principal is accountable for, *inter alia*, the quality of instruction, teaching practices and curriculum supervision (Portin, 2004:16). For the latter to be achieved, educators need to be intrinsically motivated and valued. Even though many respondents (46.3%) believed that their principals made them feel valued, more than one-third (35.8%) felt otherwise. This would explain why a large percentage (68.7%) of the respondents indicated that their morale was low.

5.4.3.7 *Relations between the principal and non-educators (clerks, parents and the community)* (statements 53, 61, 63, 70, 72 to 75 & 83)

As educational leader of the school, the principal is responsible for the delegation of duties and responsibilities to his personnel. To delegate is a means of ensuring that tasks are completed in a corporate and inclusive manner. More than half (58.2%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that the principal successfully delegated tasks to the administrative clerks of the school. However, 19.4% of respondents disagreed with this statement. The inability to delegate tasks to subordinates implies a failure to run the school successfully.

Non-educator staff includes the clerical, maintenance and security personnel in most public schools. The better resourced schools generally have a bigger non-educator staff component which includes technical and library assistants, teacher assistants, catering staff, sports coaches, *etc.* The majority of respondents (40.3%) were uncertain as to whether education managers provide adequate support services to non-educators at school. This could be because it is not really the work of education managers to provide support services to non-educators; instead this falls within the job descriptions of the principal and the SGB (KZN DoE, 2007:40-46). On the other hand, almost a third of the

respondents (29.9%) agreed with the statement that education managers do in fact provide adequate services to non-educators at school. Moreover, 47.8% of the respondents believed that management ensured that the educator and non-educator personnel worked in harmony for the smooth functioning of the school.

Public institutions such as libraries, museums, the media and social services could be utilized in conjunction with schools for the total development of the child (Lewis, 2000:419-420). However, 52.5% of the respondents disagreed that education managers enlisted the services of these public institutions for the benefit of learners. Affluent parents, on the other hand, exposed their children to other useful resources such as the internet, by means of which other educational facilities are easily within reach. Only 29.9% of respondents agreed, however, that education managers utilized the services of public institutions for the benefit of learners.

Schools are community institutions whose prime objective it is to educate the children of the community and to prepare them for their future roles in society (Goldring & Hausman, 1997:25). The devolution of authority to the community implies, *inter alia*, that the community selects the schools' leaders. School leaders are expected to live up to the expectations of the communities that have entrusted their hopes and aspirations on them. Respondents in the survey either disagreed (37.3%) or were uncertain (37.3%) as to whether education managers took time to understand the community well. Only 23.9% of respondents agreed with the statement.

There ought to be a synergistic relationship between schools and the communities they serve (Hayward 2003:10). Education managers are chosen by the SGBs who, in turn, are elected from the communities. In view of the cosmopolitan nature of the communities, it is of the utmost importance for education managers to find ways and means of unifying educators and parents. The fact that language barriers prevail in many communities implies that schools have to try harder. Education managers need to find people in the parent community to serve as cultural and linguistic 'bridges' to improve parent-educator relations at school. Of the respondents in the survey 62% disagreed that this was being

done at their schools. The fact that only 13.4% of respondents believed that this was being done casts doubts about the calibre of education managers being appointed.

The KZN Department of Education's *Masifundisane* ('Wiping out illiteracy') Campaign is aimed at improving the literacy, numeracy, computer and other skills of learners and adults alike (KZN DoE, 2006:1). As community structures, schools need to create opportunities for parents to develop their advocacy skills which would empower and encourage them to strengthen their ties with the schools (Clark & Dorris, 2006:22). Greater involvement would mean higher levels of commitment. Regrettably, of the educators surveyed, the vast majority (62.2%) disagreed with the statement that opportunities existed at their schools for parents to develop their skills.

Many respondents (53.7%) agreed with the statement that education managers created opportunities for parents to interact freely with the school personnel to promote the best interests of learners. However, such occasions should not merely serve to convince authorities that parent-teacher relations are alive and well at school. The majority of parents attending occasions at school instead of just a handful, as seems to be the case, would yield the desired results. Decision-making involving both educators and parents is essential for the smooth functioning of schools, but, as 44.8% of respondents in the survey indicated, joint decision-making involving both educators and parents does not take place at their schools. In rural schools in particular, the involvement of parents is restricted, due to extraneous or mitigating circumstances, such as the distances between the school and the home, and the lack of transport available.

5.5 SUMMARY

In chapter 5 the empirical data obtained by means of a questionnaire were presented and discussed (*cf.* Appendix A). The interpretation of the data indicates that the participants in this study perceived the appointment process of education managers to have inherent weaknesses which are contributing to a myriad of challenges that the schools face. As a result, the calibre of candidates appointed to promotion posts at the schools becomes

questionable. Moreover, the functioning of the school is hampered, with a breakdown in inter-personal relations, conflict and disharmony, a low educator morale, and a decline in service delivery.

In chapter 6 conclusions emanating from the study will be presented. Recommendations to improve the process of the appointment of education managers will also be made, as well as recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The problem that was investigated in this study is the appointment process of education managers and its consequences for schools. The study therefore investigated the following questions:

What are the processes involved in the appointment of education managers at schools?

What are the educators' perceptions of the appointment process of education managers at schools?

What are the educators' views on the consequences of the appointment process?

Accordingly, the aims of the research were to undertake a study of relevant literature to determine what processes were involved in the appointment of education managers; to conduct an investigation to determine how the appointment process was perceived by a group of educators; to establish how the appointment process impacted on the functioning of schools; and to make recommendations on how the appointment process can be improved, based on the literature review and on the research results.

In this chapter conclusions will be made, as well as recommendations for improvements, and for further study. The limitations of the study will also be highlighted.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

6.2.1 Conclusions from the literature study

In chapter 2 literature on the appointment process of education managers at school level was reviewed. An investigation was undertaken on the combined roles played by the Department of Education and the SGB.

Promotion posts become available from time to time as a result of attrition, *i.e.* resignation, retirement, death, transfers or as a result of operational changes such as an increase in learner intake. Vacant posts are advertised in human resource bulletins. The sifting of applications are done at the Circuit Offices to check, accept or reject applications. The SGB then informs the teacher Unions of its management plan to commence the selection process and the subsequent processes of short-listing, and of interviewing and selection of candidates. (See section 2.3, in particular.)

The efficacy of the interview panels of the SGB was discussed in terms of their handling of the interview process (section 2.3.3). Questioning skills, and listening and recording skills, and the ability to discriminate between the various candidates' responses, appeared to be areas where interview committees fell short. The role that the Department of Education plays in equipping and empowering SGB interview panels to be able to select candidates for promotion posts appeared to have inherent flaws, which impact negatively on the appointment process.

SGBs often select candidates for promotion posts on dubious grounds, and the Department appoints these candidates on the premise that they are chosen by elected representatives of the parent community. Current legislation also permits candidates without any experience in school management. In addition, any educator can apply for promotion to any post level, and may then eventually successfully apply for the post of principal. This is termed 'level-hopping' and is made permissible by the low minimum requirements for promotion that are applicable at present (see section 2.2.3).

Gender bias was also found to be relevant in the appointment process as males overshadow females in managerial positions, whilst females are numerically superior outside of management (*i.e.* as post level 1 educators). (See section 2.2.5.)

The post-appointment processes of induction, mentorship and evaluation were also discussed. Evidently, these processes which are the functions of the Department of Education, were not conducted to the satisfaction of educators, parents, learners, *etc.* The consequences of the appointment process were discussed in Chapter 3.

In chapter 3 the education managers' impact on the functioning of the schools was highlighted. Education managers perform four main functions, namely those of planning, organizing, leading and controlling. Whilst the primary function of education specialists is the management of specific learning areas, the principal and deputy principal are overall in charge of managing the smooth functioning of the school. The choices that the SGB makes in the school's leadership invariably determines the ethos of the school, the morale of its educators, and ultimately the future of the school. (See section 3.2.)

The leadership styles of education managers have a direct bearing on human relations at the school. The successful relations between educators on the one hand and the significant others (the non-educators, learners, the SGB, parents and the community) on the other determine the extent to which a culture of learning and teaching is attained at the school. (These relationships are highlighted in section 3.3.)

6.2.2 Conclusions from the empirical investigation

With regard to the appointment process (Section B of the survey), the following conclusions can be made from the results explicated in chapter 5:

- According to the results, respondents believed that the *minimum requirements* for promotion posts should include a degree in Education Management with at least seven years' teaching experience. Respondents generally agreed that there should

be sequential promotions instead of level-hopping, and pre-service training would prepare better leaders.

- Respondents indicated that *short-listing of candidates* does not lead to the recruitment of the most suitable candidates. To improve short-listing, this process should allow school visits by candidates to gain information. Candidates' suitability should be based on merit and not on the CVs only, and referees should be contacted to verify the information contained in CVs.
- According to the respondents, the *interview processes* should include the training of interview committee members to ensure competence. There ought to be more than a single interview so that more inclusive assessments of the candidates could be established. Respondents mostly agreed that not all SGB members were able to select suitable candidates for promotion. Often members of the interview committees lacked interview skills such as questioning, listening and recording. Interviewers tended to favour candidates who were eloquent.
- On the *selection and recommendation of candidates*, and the *role of bias*, it was found that, according to the respondents, there was no democratic representation of parents on the SGBs. Sectionalism, politics, race, and to a certain extent religion, all play a role when it comes to selecting candidates for promotion. In addition, respondents believed that the SGB chairperson had a significant influence on who was to be recommended for a position. There were inadequate discussions on the suitability of candidates prior to making recommendations to the Department of Education, and in-house candidates were generally preferred to candidates from outside the school.
- Regarding the *appointment process* itself, respondents tended to disagree that the SGB should recommend candidates to the Department of Education. The fact that only a few (or no) high ranking departmental officials were present at the interviews, especially interviews for principalships, was unacceptable. The absence of performance contracts, especially for senior managers, was another area of concern, as indicated by the respondents.
- With regard to *post-appointment processes*, respondents tended to agree that insufficient attention was given to induction and mentorship programmes by the

Department of Education, and uncertainty existed as to whether mentor-training in education management and leadership was adequately done.

Section C of the survey dealt with the consequences of the appointment process on the functioning of schools. The following are the main conclusions from the survey:

- Regarding the *maintenance of the traditions, values and the ethos of the school*, there was general uncertainty if newly appointed principals maintain the traditions, values and ethos of the schools.
- With regard to *curriculum, quality issues and in-service training*, there was consensus that educators were not impressed by the methods of quality assurance (e.g. IQMS). Education specialists, it was felt, carried out the quality assurance mandate in an incompetent manner. On the other hand, the respondents believed that education managers prioritised in-service training and curriculum delivery.
- With reference to *inter-personal relations*, respondents indicated that there appeared to exist good relations between the principals and SMTs, and this augured well in terms of task delegation and completion at school. However, with regards to the relations between the principal and SGB, there did not seem to exist very good relations, which would militate against the accomplishments of joint ventures at school.
- As far as the *influence on learners* was concerned, the survey revealed that education managers afforded educators the freedom to explore strategies to enhance learner achievement, and learners were afforded opportunities to make suggestions on educational issues. However, with regard to learner violence and bad behaviour, the survey revealed that in the respondents' views the principal fell short. Pastoral care for learners who were socially and financially deprived was also non-existent.
- The survey revealed important findings regarding the *relations between the principal and educators, and educators' well-being*. Respondents believed that education managers exercised poor control in respect of educator stress. Educators were not adequately involved in decision-making and this added to their stress levels, and contributed to low educator morale. As the needs of

educators did not seem to be met, educators did not feel valued. More than two-thirds of the respondents indicated a low morale. One reason for low educator morale could be the system of educator promotions.

- Finally, the survey found that as far as the *relations between the principal and non-educators* were concerned, there existed insufficient support services for non-educators. Auxiliary services such as the use of libraries and museums were not prioritized by education managers; relations between the principal and the school communities were generally poor; minimal parental involvement prevailed in decision-making at school; and the involvement of parents in learner activities after school was not very good.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.3.1 Recommendations for improving the process of the appointment of education managers

6.3.1.1 The position of the deputy principal as principal-in-waiting

Whilst the principal is overall in charge of all aspects pertaining to the school, there is an arbitrary distinction in the job descriptions of the principal and deputy principal (*cf.* 3.2.1). In the absence of the principal, the deputy principal takes his place. However, this is not a factor that is necessarily taken into consideration when there is a vacancy for a principal. Level-hopping makes it possible for an educator from any level to successfully apply for the principal's post. The expected consequence of this is that SGBs are free to select level 1 candidates to school principalships, and this may lead to a decline in the morale of the serving deputy principal.

In Kenya (Bush & Oduro, 2006:362), deputy principals are appointed to the principalship without any further leadership/management training. Deputy principals generally 'shadow' principals and in so doing gain the necessary expertise that is needed to run the

schools. However, this does not mean automatic entry into a principalship, as deputy principals need to satisfy the other requirements as outlined in 6.3.2.2 to 6.3.2.18.

6.3.1.2 The importance of principal-preparation

The present system requires from a principal a minimum education qualification of M+3 with seven years' teaching experience (*cf.* 2.2.3). No requirement is made for a candidate to have experience in management, yet such candidates are being appointed in senior management positions (*cf.* 1.1). This has inevitably challenged the educational landscape to alarming levels. Bush and Oduro (2006:363) attest to the fact that in South Africa in many instances appointments are made without principals being prepared for their new roles. Such principals have to rely on their own experience and common sense to make their schools work.

6.3.1.3 The role of leadership academies and assessment centres

Leadership academies are institutions that train, equip and certify individuals who have leadership qualities. First World nations such as Australia, the United States of America and the United Kingdom utilize leadership academies in preparing school leaders (Blackmore *et al.*, 2006:313). In the USA, a program called IDEAS (Identifying and Developing Educational Administrators for Schools) has been developed. Personnel from schools are identified and recruited to the program for leadership development (Kirkpartick, 2000:42).

Assessment centres test candidates' leadership, management and communication skills. This model was developed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. A requirement for the principalship in particular should include a written test on areas such as curriculum instruction, law and management, human relations, personnel development, conflict resolution, *etc.*

There exists a dire need for such leadership academies and assessment centres in South Africa. Since the present system of education is based on overseas models (*cf.* 1.1), it makes sense to have leadership academies prepare individuals for leadership position, as is done overseas. Academies do exist in other domains such as sport, culture, dance, and arts and science, *etc.*

6.3.1.4 Forming partnerships between universities and the Ministry of Education

At present there is no institution in South Africa that is mandated to train and equip school principals (*cf.* 6.3.1.2 and 6.3.1.3). Serious consideration needs to be given by authorities to address this void. The following example could be considered by higher education institutions in South Africa : In the Seychelles there exists a partnership between the Ministry of Education and the University of Lincoln in the UK, to provide training at masters level for principals and senior managers. Whitaker (2003:50) adds that SGBs and policy-makers need to identify and prepare candidates for principalships in partnership with teacher Unions.

6.3.1.5 A degree in Education Management as minimum requirement

Nations of the world determine their own benchmarks which serve as guiding tools. In the USA for example, principals have to obtain licenses, with a Masters degree as a minimum requirement for a management position (Milstein & Associates, 1993:149). Bush and Oduro (2006:363) maintain that in Gauteng, which is believed to be South Africa's leading province in terms of progress in education, 65% of principals have not progressed beyond their initial degree, while almost a third are not graduated. To compensate for this shortfall, the Department of Education holds short in-service training sessions which last for a few days on specific areas of management. This is inadequate. A degree in Education Management ought to be made mandatory for an aspiring education manager.

6.3.1.6 *Encouraging and developing senior teachers and assistant principals*

Leaders are made, not born; and ever so often positions of leadership go vacant. It is for this reason that districts, regions and provinces need to encourage teachers with leadership potential to consider preparing for administrative roles. The present National Teaching Awards programme of the Department of Education attracts several educators who participate in the programme. A pool of aspirant leaders could be drawn up and the SGBs could be informed about them. Such an initiative could culminate in a joint SGB-Department of Education venture in head-hunting leadership potential.

6.3.1.7 *Gender equity*

Women who possess the required skills, attributes and capabilities deserve to receive the same treatment and consideration as men. If not, this would imply unfair labour practise. It is a different matter if there were no female applicants for a post. Gender balance as practiced in Australia and New Zealand could be introduced in South Africa, where, if the principal is a male, the deputy-principal would be a female, and *vice versa*. The preparation of female educators for leadership positions should be a deliberate and conscientious endeavour on the part of the Department of Education.

6.3.1.8 *The SGB's role in recruitment*

Head-hunting is essential since "...the best qualified candidates are not always looking for a job" (Jones, 1995:19). These candidates need to be approached and if necessary, coerced into accepting positions of leadership. This is being practised by certain schools, as is evident in the report by the Ministerial Committee on Schools that Work. This committee was commissioned by the National Minister of Education in 2007 and found *inter alia*, that successful schools embarked upon recruitment drives to find the best leaders and educators for a school.

At present vacancies for the position of principal that appear in the human resource bulletins and education websites are very brief, and give no details of the job requirements for a principal. It is acknowledged that the generic aspects of a principal's job require very little advertising because they are well-known to all principals. However, selection committees ought to be provided with lists of short-listed candidates with detailed information about the specific nature of the principalship at a school. In so doing candidates would be better apprised and would be in a position to make an informed decision. And, selectors will be in agreement as to the kind of principal they are looking for.

6.3.1.9 Interview committees and verification of CVs

The names and contact details of referees appear on candidates CVs. It is known that SGB interview panels do not, as a matter of course, contact referees to verify the information about candidates. Since the CV is the most important document for a candidate to secure his/her short-listing, it is necessary that mechanisms be put in place for referees to be contacted. In the absence thereof, procedural incompetence will result which would indict the entire short-listing, as well as the subsequent interview process. A recommendation in this regard would be that interview committees request written verifications from all referees about the suitability of these candidates for the positions that they apply for. Candidates' ratings for the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) should also be requested by interview panels so as to determine their performance ratings in their schools.

The verification of candidates' details would allow interview panels to make informed choices in respect of the suitability of candidates for the advertised positions.

6.3.1.10 Broad selection process

The interview process should be extended to include simulation exercises, written tests, public-speaking assignments and interviews with community leaders. Short-listed

candidates should be exposed to these processes prior to the interview. By enlarging the selection process selector bias could be eradicated, and the credibility of the chosen candidate would not be in question.

6.3.1.11 Increased representation of principals on selection panels

By increasing the representation of principals on selection panels, the selection process would be enhanced and the opportunities for SGB impropriety (nepotism on grounds of race, political affiliation, sectionalism, among others) would be placed in check. This is standard practice in countries such as Australia, the UK and the USA (Blackmore *et al.*, 2006:313).

6.3.1.12 Merit selection and selection planning

The selection process of education managers needs to be changed in line with the reforms in curriculum, pedagogy, teacher education and workplace learning. Succession planning ought to be done at district level, where district officers plan guidelines for a smooth transition once a serving principal retires. Succession planning is all about anticipating future needs in leadership, about identifying the right people to fulfil those needs, about attracting those people, giving them opportunities to develop and providing incentives.

6.3.1.13 In-house candidates versus candidates from outside

Legislation governing the appointment process of education managers clearly spells out that representivity, gender equity and redress, together with suitable qualifications and relevant experience should be the factors guiding the selection of the most suitable candidate for a post. However, SGBs have been known to select candidates from their own schools above other candidates largely on the basis that these candidates are familiar to them. This is selector bias and needs to be addressed by the Department of Education.

6.3.1.14 School visits by short-listed candidates

The present system of selection of education managers does not make provision for short-listed candidates to get first-hand information about a school. Visiting a school should form part of the selection procedure and should be properly organized. For such a process to take place, a timetable would need to be drawn up for candidates, so that their information-gaining experience does not interfere with the running of the school.

6.3.1.15 Training of interview committees

The present system of workshopping SGBs to conduct interviews with education managers is inadequate. Selection committees need to be trained on an ongoing basis. Besides being trained on the technical aspects relating to interview procedures, the relevance of the process should be highlighted. The following are some of the aspects that selection committees need to be educated on:

- competencies sought from interviewees for the advertised positions;
- procedures according to which the above competencies need to be evaluated;
- questioning techniques (cf. 2.4.2.2);
- listening techniques (cf. 2.4.2.2);
- the eloquent versus the not so eloquent candidate (cf.2.4.2.2);
- manners of treating evidence; and
- reaching a final decision.

Training and capacity building workshops should be conducted by designated officials of the Department or external consultants, and these workshops should be accompanied by some type of certification indicating the competence of the participant.

6.3.1.16 Introduction of performance contracts

Performance contracts should be entered into between the Department of Education and the successful candidates. These contracts should include a period of time (*e.g.* 3 years)

and should cover the duties and responsibilities of managers in accordance with their job descriptions as legislated in the relevant acts (South African Schools Act, Educators' Employment Act, etc.).

6.3.1.17 Induction programme for new principals

The induction programme for newly appointed principals is generally conducted by the Superintendent of Education/Ward Manager together with the SGB chairperson (*cf.* 2.4.2.6). It is a process that is of a superficial nature, primarily for the purpose of expediency than a value-added endeavour for the orientation of the new candidate for the position. Kitavi and Van der Westhuizen (1997:260-262) outline the following induction strategies for new principals, which the researcher recommends should be considered by the authorities:

- Assign a veteran principal to assist a new appointee.
- Provide new principals with manuals.
- Ensure a smooth transition by involving the outgoing principal.
- Encourage networking with other principals.
- Orient the new principal to the school and its community.

Lovely (2004:1) adds that induction, mentorship and buddy programmes serve as support structures to newly appointed principals. She further points out that a former principal who works at the district office, but who does not act in a supervisory capacity to principals, would be an ideal mentor.

6.3.2 Recommendations for further study

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that further research should be done on how to

- train interview panels of the SGB;
- restructure interviews to include role-playing, problem-solving, public speaking, addressing meetings and conflict resolution, amongst others;

- create opportunities to enhance district-university partnerships to skill and train candidates to fill leadership roles;
- create leadership academies and assessment centres that prepare educators for future leadership roles;
- create 'leadership pools' and make submissions to the SGBs about potential candidates for leadership positions.

6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of the study include the following:

- The sample used in the study was restricted to three schools only, namely a rural school, a peri-urban school and an urban school from one district of KwaZulu-Natal. The system of operation of SGBs in other provinces may not necessarily be the same as that of KZN. Thus, the results cannot be generalized to all schools in other provinces of South Africa.
- Primary schools, combined or comprehensive schools and private/independent schools were not included in the study. The results should therefore be generalised to these schools with great caution.
- The investigation was quantitative only. A qualitative research project that involves an in-depth investigation on how educators and principals experience the current promotion system may shed additional light on the issue. In this regard an ethnography of one or more selected schools can be recommended to better understand the effect of the current process on the functioning of schools.

6.5 SUMMARY

This study highlighted the important processes involved in the appointment of education managers at schools. In its present form the appointment process is open to and has been abused by individuals to the extent that the functioning of schools have been influenced negatively. The two-tier approach to the appointment of education managers (involving both the SGB and the Department of Education) is preferred to the previous

superintendent-only selection method. Interview committees need to be trained and assessed for competence. Questioning, listening and recording are vital skills that need to be mastered by selection panels. The role of the Department of Education needs to be more pronounced, as the filling of a vacant post has lasting consequences for the school as a community institution. Applicants for managerial positions also need to be exposed to more than just one interview and need to show competence in the position that they are aspiring towards. Hence the need for performance contracts.

If the appointment process of education managers could be improved, the positive consequences for schools would be increased. Ultimately, this should lead to improved educator morale, better teaching and learning, and to an improved society.

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ANNEXURE A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Hi There,

This questionnaire seeks information on the appointment process of education managers at school level. It also seeks information on the effects the appointment process has on the functionality of the school, and on educator morale.

The data gathered from this questionnaire is for research purposes only. Information supplied will be treated in **strict confidentiality** and personal details will be kept **anonymous**.

- Please follow the instructions carefully.
- Respond to all the questions.
- Please respond within one week. Deliver completed questionnaires to your school secretary.

Instruction : Please circle the appropriate number on the questionnaire.

SECTION A: PERSONAL DETAILS

			FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
			<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
1. Your gender:	Male	1	V1
	Female	2	
2. Age on 30 June 2008:	29 years and younger	1	V2
	30 – 39 years	2	
	40 – 49 years	3	
	50 years and older	4	
3. Experience in current employment:	Less than one year	1	V3
	1 – 5 years	2	
	6 – 10 years	3	
	More than 10 years	4	
			V4
4. Teaching/ Educational qualification/s:	Teaching Certificate	1	V5
	Teaching Diploma	2	
	Bachelor's Degree	3	
	Master's Degree	4	
	Doctoral Degree	5	
5. Post currently held at school:	Teacher/ educator	1	
	Education Specialist	2	

	130				
	Deputy Principal	3			
	Principal	4			V6
6. Area where school is located:	Rural	1			
	Peri-urban	2			
	Urban	3			V7
7. Learner enrolment at my school is:	Less than 630	1			
	630 or more	2			V8
8. The number of permanent educators teaching at my school is:	15 educators or less	1			
	16 – 25 educators	2			
	26 - 35 educators	3			
	More than 35educators	4			V9
9. To the best of my knowledge, the principal of my school comes from:	The local community	1			
	Another community	2			
	Uncertain	3			V10
10. The principal performs his functions with a degree of professionalism and efficiency:	Seldom	1			
	Often	2			
	Always	3			

11

SECTION B : THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY IN THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS OF EDUCATION MANAGERS

*NB. The abbreviation **DoE** stands for Department of Education; and **SGB** stands for School Governing Body.*

		Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	For Official Use
11.	The DoE needs to train interview committees.	1	2	3	V12

12.	The minimum academic qualification for principals should be a degree in education management.	1	2	3	V13
13.	The minimum years of teaching experience for promotion to a principal's post should be 7 years.	1	2	3	V14
14.	Promotion of educators should be sequentially (ie from post level 1 to post level 2 to post level 3, etc.)	1	2	3	V15
15.	The SGB should recommend candidates for appointment, and the DoE should appoint them.	1	2	3	V16
16.	A single interview is sufficient for the SGB to make its choice of an education manager.	1	2	3	V17
17.	Short listed candidates should be afforded the opportunity to visit the school for information gathering purposes.	1	2	3	V18
18.	In the appointment of school principals, there should be more high ranking departmental officials present than currently is.	1	2	3	V19
19.	The appointment process of principals/ deputy principals should include performance contracts.	1	2	3	V20
20.	The DoE's induction programme is sufficient for newly appointed education managers to perform their functions.	1	2	3	V21
21.	The DoE provides adequate mentorship to its newly appointed education managers.	1	2	3	V22
22.	Mentors themselves are trained and skilled in education management/ leadership.	1	2	3	V23
23.	The DoE evaluates the performances of all education managers with a view to improve practice.	1	2	3	V24
24.	Pre-service training with certification for managers would prepare better leaders.	1	2	3	V25
25.	There is a demographic representation of parents on the SGB.	1	2	3	V26
26.	The SGB recruits the most suitable candidates to fill in vacant managerial positions at school.	1	2	3	V27
27.	The SGB chairperson influences other members of the SGB when it comes to choosing candidates for promotion posts.	1	2	3	V28
28.	Sectionalism plays a role in the selection of candidates for promotion posts at my school.	1	2	3	V29
29.	Belonging to the same religious group is a factor that is taken into account when selecting candidates for promotion posts at my school.	1	2	3	V30
30.	Belonging to the same political party influences the choice of candidate for promotion posts at my school.	1	2	3	V31

31.	Race plays a role in the selection of candidates for promotion at my school.	1	2	3	V32
32.	The competency levels of members of the interview panel are suitable for the job of selecting candidates for promotion posts at my school.	1	2	3	V33
33.	The SGB discusses the suitability of its choice of candidate/s before making recommendations to the DoE.	1	2	3	V34
34.	Applicants with impressive curriculum vitae (CV's) get short-listed above other candidates.	1	2	3	V35
35.	Candidates with fluent verbal skills get chosen above those who are not so fluent in speech.	1	2	3	V36
36.	Listening as a skill needed for interviews is well mastered by the SGB.	1	2	3	V37
37.	The SGB verifies information on CV's by contacting referees whose names appear in the CV's.	1	2	3	V38
38.	The SGB generally chooses candidates from within the school rather than from elsewhere.	1	2	3	V39
39.	All candidates receive the same treatment by the SGB during the interview process.	1	2	3	V40
40.	In the final selection, male candidates are generally preferred to female candidates at my school.	1	2	3	V41
41.	Newly appointed principals uphold the values/ethos of the school.	1	2	3	V42
42.	Newly appointed principals maintain the traditions of the school.	1	2	3	V43
43.	Post level 1 educators co-operate fully with newly appointed managers at the school.	1	2	3	V44
44.	Educators are favourably disposed towards quality assurance as is currently carried out by education managers.	1	2	3	V45
45.	Education managers carry out quality assurance processes in a competent manner.	1	2	3	V46
46.	Education managers inform educators about in-service training.	1	2	3	V47
47.	Education managers encourage educators to attend in-service training.	1	2	3	V48

48.	The principal prioritizes curriculum delivery at my school.	1	2	3	V49
49.	Education managers keep stressors such as extra duties to a minimum at my school.	1	2	3	V50
50.	Education managers keep stressors such as extra paperwork to a minimum at my school.	1	2	3	V51
51.	Education managers create opportunities for educators to work collaboratively with their peers to enhance their leadership abilities.	1	2	3	V52
52.	Education managers involve educators in meaningful decision-making at my school.	1	2	3	V53
53.	The principal successfully delegates tasks to the administration clerks of the school.	1	2	3	V54
54.	The principal successfully delegates duties and responsibilities to the deputy principal at my school.	1	2	3	V55
55.	The principal enjoys cordial relations with the deputy principal at my school.	1	2	3	V56
56.	The principal enjoys cordial relations with the education specialists at my school.	1	2	3	V57
57.	There is a good working relationship between the principal and members of the SGB at my school.	1	2	3	V58
58.	The SMT and SGB of my school work in together in addressing school issues.	1	2	3	V59
59.	Finances are well managed by the principal/SGB.	1	2	3	V60
60.	Education managers provide adequate support services to non-educators at school.	1	2	3	V61
61.	Education managers ensure that both the educator and non-educator personnel work in harmony for the smooth functioning of the school.	1	2	3	V62
62.	Education managers provide support services to learners at my school on an ongoing basis.	1	2	3	V63
63.	Education managers enlist the services of public institutions (eg. libraries, museums, etc.) for the benefit of learners.	1	2	3	V64
64.	Educators have the freedom to explore strategies to enhance learner achievement at my school.	1	2	3	V65
65.	Learners are afforded the opportunity to make suggestions on educational issues.	1	2	3	V66
66.	Learner ill-discipline is handled well by the principal.	1	2	3	V67
67.	The principal deals with learner violence in a fair manner.	1	2	3	V68
68.	The principal ensures that learners who are socially disadvantaged are adequately taken care of at school.	1	2	3	V69

69.	The principal ensures that learners who are financially disadvantaged are adequately taken care of at school.	1	2	3	V70
70.	Education managers take time to understand the community well.	1	2	3	V71
71.	The principal handles challenges relating to race relations well.	1	2	3	V72
72.	Education managers find people in the parent community to serve as cultural and linguistic bridges to improve parent-educator relations at my school.	1	2	3	V73
73.	Opportunities exist at my school for parents to develop their advocacy skills(such as literacy, numeracy and computer skills).	1	2	3	V74
74.	Education managers create opportunities for parents to interact freely with the school to promote the best interests of learners.	1	2	3	V75
75.	Group decision-making involving both educators and parents takes place at my school.	1	2	3	V76
76.	My morale is high.	1	2	3	V77
77.	The present system of educator promotions has raised the morale of educators at my school.	1	2	3	V78
78.	Morale among female educators is higher than among male educators.	1	2	3	V79
79.	The principal includes educators in decision-making at my school.	1	2	3	V80
80.	The principal takes time to understand the needs of educators.	1	2	3	V81
81.	Education managers afford educators freedom to work creatively with learners.	1	2	3	V82
82.	The most important influence on educator morale is the caring attitudes of education managers.	1	2	3	V83
83.	Education managers ensure parent involvement in learner activities after school hours (eg. homework control).	1	2	3	V84
84.	The principal makes educators feel valued.	1	2	3	V85

ANNEXURE B

LETTER OF PERMISSION

(Retyped from original letter from the KZN Department of Education)

Mr G Dehaloo
PO Box 3006
STANGER
4450

PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW LEARNERS AND EDUCATORS

The above matter refers.

Permission is hereby granted to interview Departmental Officials, learners and educators in selected schools of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal subject to the following conditions:

1. You make all the arrangements concerning your interviews.
2. Educators' and work programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, educators and schools and other Departmental Officials are not identifiable in any way from the results of the interviews.
5. Your interviews are limited only to targeted schools.
6. A brief summary of the interview content, findings and recommendations is provided to my office.
7. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers and principals of schools or heads of sections where the intended interviews are conducted.

The KZN Department of Education fully supports your commitment to research: The appointment process of education managers and its consequences for schools.

It is hoped that you will find the above in order.
Best wishes.

